

GEORGE BALDWIN AND BRITISH INTERESTS IN EGYPT

1775 TO 1798

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ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to analyse British interests in Egypt during the twenty-three years before the French expedition of 1798, and centres around George Baldwin, the only permanent English resident in the country at that time, who foresaw its importance to Britain in the event of a war with France. Although much stress is placed on Baldwin's promotion of the Red Sea route to India, a proper evaluation of British activity necessarily encompasses a comprehensive survey of Anglo-Egyptian relations during the period.

Chapter I deals with the first four years of Baldwin's residence, from 1775 to 1779, when he was primarily concerned with his work as a merchant; his trade was carried on concurrently in Suez, Alexandria and Cairo, and he was also involved in expediting the East India Company's dispatches to and from India. In 1779, he was forced to flee the country after a major clash with the ruling beys; it became clear to him then that any further activity in Egypt would only be possible with the establishment of official consular representation. Chapter II is concerned with the years 1779 to 1786 during the absence of Baldwin, when the French were busily involved in securing the right to navigate the Red Sea; this resulted in the Truguet agreements of 1785. Chapter III concentrates on the

British reaction to the agreements, and points to the fact that Henry Dundas, the senior member of the newly-created Board of Control for Indian Affairs, was instrumental in appointing Baldwin as Consul-General in Egypt. Chapter IV is an examination of the seven years, from 1786 to 1793, of the British consulate, at the end of which the post was discontinued. The last chapter shows how Baldwin remained in Egypt until March 1798 when ill-health and poverty obliged him to leave, and how, finally, it was to him that the commanders of the Mediterranean forces turned in preparing plans for the British landings in Egypt in March 1801.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express deep gratitude to Professor P. M. Holt, for his guidance and encouragement in the supervision of this study.

TRANSLITERATION

The transliteration of Arabic words in this study follows the system adopted in the second edition of the Encyclopaedia of Islam (except in the case of names that have a generally accepted form in English), with three alterations:

is transliterated thus: j

Q is " " : q

Is " : 4

Modern Turkish forms are used with three exceptions:

ch is substituted for c

gh is " " mgc

sh is " " a

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INTRODUCTION

Any account of the British in Egypt during the eighteenth century must start from a consideration of the commercial interests involved, for the basis of political development stemmed directly from the desire to promote better trading conditions and greater profits. This study is primarily concerned with the political ramifications of one merchant's desire to establish a secure foothold for himself and his countrymen in Egypt. George Baldwin was alone in his efforts during the last quarter of the century to bring about British recognition of the importance of Egypt; he first saw it as a great economic advantage, and later tried to point out its invaluable strategic value. The reasons for his failure to successfully convince the authorities in London of the validity of his ideas are many, and far from simple to understand.

Throughout the period of his stay in Egypt, indeed in some cases considerably before, it is possible to discern certain forces strongly opposed to one another and in constant action and reaction against one another; the resulting friction caused a peculiar state of political lethargy in which very little development occurred. For example, the beys of Egypt were repeatedly in a state of opposition with the Porte; the mamluks themselves were hopelessly divided; the Levant Company strongly disapproved of the government in India and its desire to promote a trade route through Suez;

the commercial considerations of the Levant Company and occasionally those of the East India Company clashed with the national interest; moreover, Ainslie, the ambassador in Constantinople, was torn between his dual responsibilities as representative of the Levant Company and of the Crown; he was also personally and ideologically a sworn enemy of Baldwin; the convictions of Baldwin the merchant necessarily clashed with those of Baldwin the consul-general; and, of course, France and Britain remained eager and often bitter rivals for positions of strength within the Ottoman Empire.

Baldwin's activities in Egypt must be seen within the context of these conflicting elements; without the necessary background he would seem to have circulated in a vacuous world of little evolution, and an account of his life would be a series of meaningless events. It is doubtful whether he was fully aware of the implications of the predicament he had chosen for himself when he first set out to settle in Egypt, or whether, as he became more familiar with the country, he closely analysed his static position. He rarely admitted the apparent futility of incompleting missions and unachieved goals, but remained firmly convinced of the truth and validity of his arguments, and manifested his single-mindedness to the best of his abilities. While it would be impossible and even slightly nonsensical to attribute the course of events during the period under study to a pattern so simply described, it is nonetheless

important to be aware of such a pattern. It is by no means an all-embracing explanation of the outcome of Baldwin's actions, but rather one that can be used to understand the recurrent episodes that ended in deadlock, and did little to encourage London to extend its influence to Egypt.

The second half of the eighteenth century in Egypt saw the disparity between the ruling beys and the Porte reach unprecedented proportions. Constantinople was clearly unable to command events in Cairo, and was very often forced to ignore the occurrences there rather than suffer an embarrassing loss of face. The fifteen-year rule of 'Alī Bey al-Kabīr probably did much to strengthen the position of the beylicate. After assuming the title of shaykh al-balad¹ in 1757, 'Alī Bey strengthened his position by ridding himself of all dissenting Mamlūks in his entourage. The inevitable withdrawal to Upper Egypt of his enemies caused him a year of exile in 1766, but he was soon back in full command and with even greater strength. His position of unopposed dictatorship brought him the mingled regard of awe and terror from the populace. With his internal power consolidated, 'Alī then turned to extending his influence abroad. In 1770, he was instrumental in installing a Hāshimī protégé as amīr of Mecca; he thereafter assumed considerable

¹Or principal bey, the acknowledged senior grandee of Cairo.

sway over the affairs of the Ḥijāz. It was also his wish to control Syria, as Egyptian rulers of strength before and after him were wont to do. In 1771, his forces captured Damascus, and he would have been able to become master of the entire country if the general commanding his expeditionary force, Muḥammad Bey Abu'l-Dhahab had not gone over to the Ottoman side. In April 1772, 'Alī was defeated by Abu'l-Dhahab, and his lease of power was at an end. The next year Abu'l-Dhahab became shaykh al-balad, and ruled over Egypt for two years.

Throughout the rule of 'Alī Bey, and later under Abu'l-Dhahab and his successors, Ibrāhīm and Murād, the rôle of the pasha in the Citadel was reduced to insignificance. As the symbol of the Porte's authority, he had little to say about the affairs of Egypt. He became a puppet in the hands of the ruling beys, and lived in the shadow of his nominal subordinates.

Although the beys were able to assume complete control of Egypt and reduce the authority of the Porte to a nominal one, it is significant that there was rarely an extended period of unopposed rule by a shaykh al-balad. The history of the government of Egypt during the last half of the eighteenth century is a complicated and anarchic mixture of factinnal opposition, last-minute desertions, and sporadic coups d'état. These were the methods by which the beys were able to strengthen themselves to the point of disassication from the Porte; the example of 'Alī Bey's rise to power may be here

cited. But these methods were, ironically, the means by which the inherent weakness of the system exposed itself, and ultimately brought about its downfall; once again, the defeat of 'Alī Bey serves as an example.

The last quarter of the century was dominated by the duumvirate of Murād and Ibrāhīm. Although at times opposed to one another, they reached a compromise for the sake of expediency, Ibrāhīm as shaykh al-balad and Murād the effective ruler. They remained in power for the entire period except for a five-year interim during which the Ottoman Empire sent a punitive expedition and established an obedient mamlūk, Ismā'īl Bey, in the position of authority. The rule of the duumvirate was characterised by immense and totally irrational extortions from all sectors of the population, both foreign and indigenous, and arrogant demonstrations of authority that caused the two beys to be hated and feared. With the increase of their internal strength came a diminution of subserviences and obedience to the Porte. The annual tribute began to fall short of its requirements, and the conditions for the hajj¹ were not fulfilled.

Given these conditions of government, it is not surprising that the Levant Company always had a rather apprehensive attitude

¹Or pilgrimage. A pilgrimage caravan left annually from Egypt for the Holy Cities, and the amir al-hajj, the second in command after the shaykh al-balad, organised and led this. He was responsible for the safety of the pilgrims, and carried a financial contribution, as well as the Holy Curtain, to the Holy Cities.

about its representation in Egypt. Its ventures in the country had never been particularly successful. In the latter part of the sixteenth century, there had been sufficient trade with Alexandria for the first consul to be appointed.¹ But high duties and the fluctuating prices of the Egyptian market made the efforts commercially unprofitable. Furthermore, the already established French and Venetian merchant communities proved to be too strong in the field of competition. The activities of English merchants began to be concentrated on shipping goods from Alexandria to eastern Mediterranean countries rather than on importing home products into Egypt. Thus, early in the seventeenth century the consulate was regarded as unworthy of expense and effort. But in 1689, there was sufficient pressure by the merchants who continued to trade in Egypt to obtain the re-establishment of the office. Nine years later, the first in a relatively long line of consuls arrived in Cairo.²

At first, the representation proved fruitful, for many commercial transactions took place: coffee, gum arabic, senna, cotton wool and sal ammoniac were sent to England in regular shipments.³

¹Harvey Millers, the first consul, was appointed in 1583. Wood, A History of the Levant Company, p.32.

²His name was Miles Fleetwood. Ibid., p.125.

³Ibid., p.165.

However, the problem of foreign competition still existed, and the merchants found little market for their own products; most important was the fact that French woollen cloth had captured the Egyptian market. This was only one of many reasons that led the Company in 1754 to decide to close the consulate and have its books transferred to Cyprus.

It has already been stated that the beys openly defied the Porte. Not the least evidence of their disregard for orders laid down for them was their sporadic waiving of the capitulations, the only protection for foreigners living in any of the dominions of the Sultan. The unexpected and ruthless avarias¹ left the English merchants of Egypt sadly bereft of what otherwise would have been regarded as hard-earned profits. Worse of all, they were powerless to protest to any higher authority than the very beys who were pressing the exorbitant demands. The insecurity of the consulate became intolerable; its isolation and consequent vulnerability to the whims of the Mamluks rendered the office worthless to the Levant Company.

Richard Harris, the consul in 1754, remained in Egypt until 1757, when he left Robert Hughes, the representative of Holland, in charge of British affairs.² Despite the official end of British

¹Demands for loans which were enforced by the beys.

²Wood, op.cit., p.166.

representation, individual traders continued to be attracted to opportunities in the Egyptian market. There must have been a sufficient number of merchants to have made John Murray, the ambassador in Constantinople, appoint a vice-consul in Cairo in 1767.¹ There are further indications of commercial transactions with Egypt. In 1772, Murray protested to the Porte about the murder of the captain and three members of the crew of the English brig, "Elizabeth," which was laden with goods and on its way from Leghorn to Alexandria.² The next year Murray appointed Constantine Macri as British agent in Alexandria against the wishes of the Levant Company³ and in 1774 the chancery register in Constantinople indicates a frequent trade route between Alexandria and Constantinople.⁴

But the interest in Egypt would certainly have petered out had not an entirely new aspect of trade attracted a handful of speculators. The desire to open a direct route between India and

¹ His name was Marion. Ibid.

² The ship was cast away on the coast of Candia on January 9, 1772. SP 97/48.

³ Wood, op.cit., p.166, says that the Levant Company acquiesced the appointment. This does not seem to be quite accurate. Macri was appointed in June, 1773. SP105/120, Lev. Co. to Macri, Feb. 22, 1774. The Company protested the appointment, and warned Macri that he had no right to act as consul. Ibid. The company also reproached Murray. SP 105/120, Lev. Co. to Murray, March 1, 1774.

⁴ SP 105/186, Chancery Register.

Egypt via the Red Sea was far from being a new idea for adventurers and geographers, but probably the first Englishman to become actively interested in it was Henry Tistew, the English consul in Tripoli, in 1698. He went through Egypt, down the Red Sea and on to Surat, hoping to work out a plan for English trade.¹ But little came of his voyage, and the plan was temporarily laid to rest. Almost seventy years later, it was taken up again with a view to having a regular commercial communication from India to England.

However, a major impediment stood in the way of the new route: the Ottoman Empire regarded the Red Sea as a Muslim lake because of its proximity to the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina. Christian vessels were officially not allowed to navigate in the waters that were carrying the pilgrims to the hajj. But the independence of the beys of Egypt from the Porte made it possible for those interested in promoting the new route to attempt direct negotiations with the shaykh al-balad. His authority could give them permission to unload at Suez, and would at the same time provide for himself a new and unexpected source of revenue. 'Alī Bey was the first ruler to be contacted.

The exact procedure for the negotiations does not seem to be very clear. It is known, however, that when James Bruce² was

¹ Charles-Roux, L'Angleterre et L'Égypte au XVIII siècle, p.7.

² James Bruce (1730-1794) the Scottish explorer and Arabist. He was British consul in Algiers in 1763, but his real interest lay

in Egypt in 1768, he approached 'Alī Bey on the subject, and the latter encouraged the idea. He was no doubt influenced in his decision by the Carlo Rosetti, a Venetian merchant resident in Cairo, who was to prove himself one of the staunchest supporters of the trade; he was also one of 'Alī Bey's advisors.¹ Later, in Jedda, Bruce met with Captain Cuthbert Thornhill, an Englishman who traded between India and Jedda. Thornhill declared himself ready to embark on the new branch of trade as soon as it seemed safe enough. When, in 1770, the influence of 'Alī Bey was extended to Jedda, it seemed as if the venture would soon begin. But it was decided that an Englishman of authority would also be needed to endorse the plan. It was to Warren Hastings of Bengal that the position of "founder and father of our cause" was offered.²

Hastings approved of the venture, and remained a supporter despite the opposition of the East India Company.³ Thus, on 18

in discovering the source of the Nile, which he was convinced was in Ethiopia. His travels to prove this took him in 1768 to Egypt. From Cairo he went to Qusayr, and then on to Jedda where he arrived in May 1769. He went back across the Red Sea, and then on to Abyssinia where he remained for two years. He returned to Cairo in early 1773.

¹ Bruce, Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile, vol. I, p.30.

² Add. Mss. 29210, f.428. "Proposals for a trade to Suez", 1773, (anon.) Hoskins, British Routes to India, p.7, claims that the writer was Bruce.

³ In 1798, after the French invasion of Egypt, he wrote to King George: "My official situation in India led me, many years ago, to contemplate Egypt as affording by the position... of Suez... greater commercial advantages than any other land upon the globe..." Add. Mss. 29234, Hastings to the King, 1798, n.d.

November 1773, he addressed a letter to the Court of Directors announcing the forthcoming voyage to Suez of Thornhill and two other men, Halford and Killiean.¹ He stated that he was going to send a schooner to accompany the merchant vessel so that it could survey the Red Sea. He saw two important outcomes of the voyage: it would be a general improvement for commerce; and it would be able to provide an excellent route for dispatches to and from England. He asked for the Court's approval of the voyage, and added that the three men were going to pay half the cost of the ship and all the charges at Suez. This first voyage was unsuccessful, however; a violent gale destroyed the schooner, and badly damaged the ship.²

In the meantime, the position of shaykh al-balad having gone to Muhammad Bey Abu'l-Dhahab, it was necessary to obtain approval once again to send English ships to Suez. When Bruce returned to Egypt in 1773, he began negotiations with the new ruler of the country.³ He was able to procure from the Mamlūk a ferman which attested to the right of English merchants to unload at Suez. It was also arranged that English goods would be subject to 8^o/o customs

¹ Egypt and the Red Sea, vol. 5 (henceforth, Egypt 5), Extract of Bengal Public Consultation, Nov. 18, 1773.

² Egypt 5, Extract of General Letter from Bengal, March 15, 1774.

³ Egypt 5, British vice-consul in Alexandria to Court of Directors, Sept. 20, 1773.

duties,¹ and have the protection of the government.²

Murray sent a translation of the ferman to London, asking for advice on how to deal with the matter. He confessed to being "at a loss". He realised that in his capacity as representative of the Levant Company he should oppose the trade, yet as British ambassador, his duty was to protect British subjects from the anger of the Porte.³ He also thought that the trade would be of great value to the East India Company, but certainly detrimental to the Levant Company who refused to "hear of a consul in Cairo".⁴ There is little doubt that Murray wished to encourage this new branch of India trade, for once again he asked the Levant Company for a consul in Egypt; once again, the reply was negative.⁵ Rochford, the secretary of state in London, had not at this time a very clear idea of how to act. He told Murray to caution English captains going to Suez to avoid any embarrassing situations, and added that the ambassador's duty was always to protect British subjects in the Ottoman Empire, whether or not the Levant and East India Companies approved.⁶

¹The duties at Jedda were usually 14°/o.

²Charles-Roux, op.cit., pp. 38-9.

³SP 97/49, Murray to Rochford, Dec. 17, 1773.

⁴Ibid.

⁵SP 105/120.

⁶SP 97/58, Rochford to Murray, Feb. 25, 1774.

When the Porte learned of the new trade plans that had been endorsed by Abu'l Dhahab, it issued a ferman in 1774¹ which spoke of the treachery of Christians who had disguised themselves as merchants and who later reduced the inhabitants of the countries they penetrated to slavery; India was cited as an example of this Christian infiltration. The ferman also said that the same kind of people had recently slipped into Egypt with the encouragement of the beys; they had already made maps of the country and would probably return to conquer it. Warning had already been given to the British ambassador at the Porte that if English boats dared to go to Suez, their cargoes would be confiscated and the passengers imprisoned.

It must be noted that the Porte had another reason for its adversity to the Suez trade than the principle of the sanctity of the Red Sea; this was founded on economic considerations. The trade, and consequently the customs duties, at Jedda would be seriously jeopardised if English ships were to bypass it for the more attractive market of Suez. Since the death of 'Alī Bey restored Ottoman influence to Jedda, the Porte and the Sharīf of Mecca would be deprived of the steady income of dues.

The content of the ferman was transmitted to London. There

¹Testa, Bibliothèque Diplomatique, vol. 2, p.71.

the government of Lord North¹ decided that the trade must not be allowed to develop. It took a very firmstand on this, and forbade English ships to go to Suez. It did not wish to defy the orders of the Porte. Furthermore, it bowed to the pressure of the Levant Company that saw any trade in the Ottoman Empire that was not a part of the Company as detrimental to its interests. The new trade threatened to compete with the Company's factors, for it would certainly sell the merchandise at a much lower price than if it were coming from London.

Undaunted, Warren Hastings sent John Shaw as his representative to Cairo in 1775 to work out a written agreement with Abu'l Dhahab Bey. Shaw concluded a convention on 17 March 1775. It gave trading privileges to English merchant ships arriving at Suez, and allowed for a regular system of communication with Egypt and England.² It granted reciprocal and completely free navigation and commerce between Great Britain and Egypt in all dominions and provinces in India and Egypt. It also gave special immunities to the subjects of both countries. The duties were fixed as follows: 6¹/₂% on Bengal and Madras goods, and 8% on Surat and Bombay goods. It is noteworthy that the agreement, which was signed by Muhammad Bey, 'Uthmān the qāḍī³ of Cairo and four 'ulamā'⁴

¹ Lord North (1732-92) was Prime Minister, 1770 to 1782.

² The complete text may be found in Testa, op.cit., vol. 2, pp. 71-3. It is also to be found in Egypt 5a.

³ Judge.

⁴ Learned men.

did not include a provision for its ratification by the Porte. This agreement formed the basis of legitimacy of the trade to Suez for the next four years.

The Levant Company and the East India Company voiced immediate disapproval of the agreement. They both saw it as a threat to their respective monopolies. The Levant Company wanted to remain in complete control of the trade in the Ottoman Empire; the East India Company was afraid that the goods going straight to Egypt from India would deprive it of its import duties in London. Both were ultimately worried about the effects the new trade would have on their own prices; Indian goods arriving from Suez would obviously be much cheaper than from London. Murray disagreed with the reasoning of the Levant Company and saw in the Suez trade an excellent opportunity to boost the waning sales of British goods in the Ottoman Empire. Hastings disagreed with the East India Company, claiming the new form of trade to be of incalculable advantage; it would open an advantageous route for dispatches to and from England, and at the same time would have great commercial benefits.

Thus the renewed interest in Egypt centred around a struggle of two adamant and opposed points of view concerning the advantages and disadvantages of the Red Sea route. The beys saw it as profitable to their income; the Porte regarded it as a distinct and flagrant disregard for the sanctity of the sea that was so close to Medina and Mecca, as well as being harmful to the trade of Jedda.

Murray and Hastings approved of a new impetus to improve British trade; the Levant Company and the East India Company violently feared any move that endangered their respective monopolies. The situation was further aggravated by the position of the government in London, which bowed to the pressure of the Levant Company and forbade the trade to take place.

Two new developments in the struggle occurred almost simultaneously, and added to the confusion of the situation. The first was the departure of John Murray from Constantinople, and the arrival of a new ambassador whose viewpoint on the subject strongly diverged from that of his predecessor. The second was the arrival in Egypt of an English merchant who was firmly convinced of the value of the new trade, and who was to shape the activities of the British in Egypt for the next twenty five years.

In 1775 John Murray received permission to visit England. On his way home he fell ill and died in the Lazaretto of Venice. Anthony Hayes, the consul at Smyrna, was chargé d'affaires until Murray's successor, Sir Robert Ainslie, arrived in Constantinople on 2 October 1776. The new ambassador's policy was clearly different from that of his predecessor in the matter of Egypt. Where Murray had always wished for an official representation in the country, Ainslie entirely disapproved of such a venture. The new ambassador was also extremely loathe to cause any displeasure to the Porte; his invariable identification with Ottoman interests

throughout his period of residence in Constantinople was to become one of his strongest characteristics. His personality as gleaned from his correspondence reflects a prim, righteous, and meticulous official; he also had a fiery temper¹ and an unforgiving nature. His stand against any form of British penetration into Egypt, more especially when it concerned the India trade, remained apart of his thought and work until the end of his stay in the Ottoman Empire.

Almost concurrently with the announcement of Ainslie's appointment to Constantinople in September 1775, another Englishman with a totally different viewpoint had just arrived in Cairo with the intention of settling there. George Baldwin was born in 1743, the son of a London hop merchant. Little is known of his life until 1760 when he sailed to Cyprus as a merchant. Three years later, he moved to Acre where he remained until 1767. During his years in Acre, he travelled up and down the Syrian coast, buying and selling silk. His early travels in the Levant acquainted him with the political structure of the area, and awakened in his mind ideas of the commercial potential it held, especially if it could be made to serve as a link with the lucrative Indian market.

¹ Choiseul-Gouffier, the French ambassador in Constantinople, horrifiedly reported one incident in which Ainslie attacked his personal secretary so violently in a fit of anger that he almost strangled the unfortunate man, Corr. Pol., Turquie, 176, Choiseul-Gouffier to Montmorin, June 22, 1788.

The possibility of exchange between the produce of Syria and Egypt, with all the riches they brought from neighbouring countries, and the wealth of the India market began to appeal to him.

It was with this idea in mind that he returned to England, and applied for leave to go to India as a free mariner. He wanted to explore the possibilities of a connection between India and Egypt. But as he was preparing to leave, he received word of the death of his brother, William Baldwin, British consul in Cyprus. He went instead to the island to clear his brother's effects. While there, he was asked to become the new consul; he accepted the position and remained in Cyprus until 1771. But he did not relinquish his earlier plans to explore a possible trade route through Egypt. It is perhaps significant that since the books of the Cairo consulate had been sent to Cyprus, Baldwin was provided with ample opportunity to acquaint himself with the conditions and general state of trade in Egypt. Furthermore, he had engaged in the silk trade with Constantine Macri, and probably learned a good deal about Egyptian affairs from him.

In the middle of 1773, he went to Cairo where he managed to have an interview with Muhammad Bey Abu'l Dhahab. It has already been stated that the Shaykh al-Balad gave Bruce his approval of the Red Sea trade; to Baldwin he repeated the encouragement, and said: "If you bring the India ships to Suez, I will lay an acq-

duct from the Nile to Suez, and you shall drink of the Nile water."¹ Baldwin wished to go to Suez then, but it was the wrong season for a journey to India. Instead he decided to go to Constantinople in order to let Murray know of his plans. The ambassador unhesitatingly approved of Baldwin's plans, and so did "everybody in the mercantile order of men".²

In March 1774, Baldwin returned to Egypt, and this time went to Suez. There he waited in vain for thirty days to find a local vessel to carry him to Jedda. Greatly disappointed, and bitterly realising it would be easier to go to India by way of England, he decided to turn back. The haji was passing by Suez on its return from Mecca at the time, so Baldwin mounted a camel and accompanied it to Cairo. From there he returned to England, convinced of the failure of his plans. But shortly after his arrival in London, he heard of the conclusion of the March 1775 agreement with Abu'l Dhahab. He immediately changed his plans, and decided to leave for Egypt as soon as possible. He freighted a ship, and set sail; he reached Alexandria in July 1775.

Before leaving England, he wrote to the Court of Directors of the East India Company, informing them of his plans to live in Cairo, and offering to be their agent there. They accepted the offer,

¹Baldwin, Political Recollections (henceforth, Pol. Rec.), p.4.

²Ibid.

and granted him a small salary. Another contact he made before sailing was of a different order. The University of Oxford commissioned him to collect manuscripts and information about the Syriac and Coptic languages and how they related to any Indian language.¹

Baldwin had had considerable commercial experience before he settled in the Levant. He claimed to have traded in all the cities of Europe,² as well as having been involved in the Levant trade. He therefore was able to argue on logical and rational terms to fellow merchants and officials regarding the values of the Red Sea venture. To begin with, he argued that the insecurity Englishmen had previously encountered in Egypt would disappear once the Beys were assured of a regular addition to their income. Furthermore, he pointed out the fact that the India goods which were being sold in Jedda had a much better market in Cairo.³ If these were not reasons enough to encourage the new form of trade, Baldwin presented yet another argument; fortunes that had been made in India would seriously endanger the economy if they were transmitted in bullion to England. If the men concerned invested their

¹This he did assiduously, for he later sent seven volumes of philosophical and moral writings of the languages to Hastings. Add. Mss. 29198, Substance of George Baldwin's letters from Cairo, Dec. 15, 1775.

²Add. Mss. 29210, f.422, "A view of the advantages and the practicability of carrying on a trade by the navigation of the Red Sea quite up to Suez between India and Egypt" by George Baldwin, March 28, 1776.

³Ibid.

money in the Red Sea venture, they would be able to transfer their fortunes to Europe, for the money they would earn in Egypt would be paid to them in Leghorn or Marseilles.

Baldwin's first efforts in Egypt were concerned with setting up a direct form of trade to England. In this he claimed to have "succeeded very prosperously".¹ He was at the same time actively engaged in encouraging the Red Sea trade by appointing agents in Smyrna and Constantinople, and collecting capital from India and other places.

Although Baldwin in 1775 was primarily a merchant, and a very ambitious one at that, he was able to foresee the political advantages of opening the Red Sea to British navigation. The voyage from London to India around the Cape took about five months; via Suez it would be a little over two months. Thus any communication would be sizeably reduced on the "overland" route to India. Furthermore, Baldwin, in an astonishing display of political intuition, was able to see the strategic value of Egypt when few Englishmen were concerned with it; he realised the valuable link it provided with India, especially at the crucial time when France and England were fiercely competing with one another. But unfortunately his political thought had not crystallised beyond the

¹Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.6.

point where it could be used to strengthen his arguments to promote the new trade; consequently his opinions were disregarded, most especially by Ainslie, as being those of a profiteering merchant. It was his position as a trader that tended to destroy any political argument he put forward, for it was then only regarded as a means to further commercial benefits.

Ainslie was firmly convinced of Baldwin's cupidity, and at no time was he willing to swerve from this manner of thinking. Baldwin was genuinely perplexed at the attitude the ambassador seemed to take on matters that should have pleased him enormously. The tension between the two men began to grow; enforced politeness gave way at first to bitter sarcasm and finally to open enmity. The characters of the two men further aggravated the tension. Baldwin's impetuous and often childlike enthusiasm did not appeal to the orderly and rational Ainslie; Baldwin was unashamedly eager to make money, and Ainslie was most disdainful of this; Baldwin took an extraordinary and very vital interest in everything around him, whereas the ambassador preferred to confine his energy for a few well-defined matters; Baldwin very soon adapted himself to the society he was living in, learning to speak Arabic and expressing himself in the manner best suited to his environment; Ainslie, because of the responsibility of his position, remained acutely aware of his rôle and the dignity that went with it. The only common point between the two men was their aware-

ness of the French threat for preponderance in the Ottoman Empire.

England and France, as the main economic powers of Europe, had been in constant competition for colonial expansion since the beginning of the eighteenth century. Their main centres of interest in the first half of the century had been India and North America. But Clive's victories in India, and the Declaration of Independence of the thirteen American colonies caused a change in the field of rivalry; the first established British dominance in the north-east coast of India and paved the way for further British penetration of the country, and the second proved to be an indirect victory for France and a major set-back for Britain. With the future development of these two areas definitely ensured by the latter part of the century, Britain and France turned their attention to the Ottoman Empire.

The power and prestige of the Ottoman Empire had begun to wane after the Treaty of Carlowitz in 1699. The authority of the Sultan had also weakened considerably, and the Porte became vulnerable to the intricacies of foreign pressure. A marked rise in European power within the Empire was first brought to light in the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarga signed in 1774 following the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-1774. The treaty accorded Russia the navigation of the Black Sea, as well as a certain access to the internal affairs of the Empire. France showed great interest in the possibility of sharing Russia's influence in the Empire, especially

since it could claim long cultural, religious, and economic ties with the Levant.

The thriving merchant communities in Egypt have already been mentioned; they provided an impetus to political considerations regarding the value of the country. The French were aware of the importance of Egypt first as a means of checking British growth in India, and second as an invaluable source of wealth in itself. As far back as the reign of Louis XIV, they had attempted political negotiations in Constantinople to open the Red Sea to French shipping; in 1665 and 1669 missions were sent from Paris to attempt to convince the Porte of this. When the missions failed, it was decided to have direct talks with the Pasha of Egypt; in 1674, Nointel, the French ambassador to Constantinople, was on his way to Cairo to do this, but was stopped in Jerusalem and never reached his destination. In 1685, yet another mission was concerned with a proposal to open a canal in Egypt that would connect the Mediterranean with the Red Sea.¹

Ainslie and Baldwin were both aware of the growing threat of France; the former was acutely conscious of its presence in the Empire as a whole, the latter most specifically with its rising preponderance in Egypt. Both men realised that it was necessary for Britain to counteract French development, but needless to

¹Charles-Roux, op.cit., p.10.

say, they disagreed on the methods to do this. Ainslie, viewing the situation from a greater perspective, believed that the wisest course open to him was to maintain the status quo of the position of the Sultan and the Porte, thereby assuring a check on any foreign pressure. Baldwin, on the other hand, was very closely involved with his French rivals; he believed it was his duty as the only Englishman in Egypt, to emulate every action of the French, no matter how it undermined the position of the pasha in the Citadel, so he could gain equal advantages for Britain whenever possible.

The odds against which he was fighting were often far too much for him to cope with. Yet, despite the many defeats he suffered during his residence in Egypt, he seemed to have a remarkable resilience. It was this quality that carried him through the difficult years when he was desperately hoping for official British recognition of his efforts and ideas; it was this ability to remain undaunted by all the enmity that grew around him that became one of the strongest features that characterised British activity in Egypt from 1775 to 1798.

Chapter IBALDWIN'S FIRST PERIOD OF RESIDENCE:1775-1779

When he arrived in July 1775 for his first period of residence in Egypt, Baldwin was the only English merchant in the country. He had already acquired the freedom of the Levant Company,¹ and immediately set about trying to establish what he later termed a prosperous trade between England and Egypt. The East India Company had named him their agent for the purpose of aiding the dispatch route from Suez to Alexandria, so he took it upon himself to act as an unofficial consul for his countrymen who were passing through Egypt. He also took advantage of his position to contact merchants in Bombay, Constantinople, Smyrna and London for the sale of India goods coming to Suez.

His involvements were almost too many and complicated for one man alone. His position as sole English merchant caused him much trouble amongst the rival European traders who stood together in national blocks; his unprotected political status was abused by the Customs Master who constantly extorted large and exorbitant sums of money from him; his involvement in the Red Sea trade brought on the anger in turn of the Porte, the British ambassador,

¹SP 105/170, Governor to Humphreys, March 14, 1775.

the Levant Company and the East India Company. Thus his ambitions for personal gain overshadowed his serious efforts to encourage an efficient dispatch route from the East Indies to London; his far-reaching political insight was overlooked in the face of his determined trade. Moreover, his recognition of the strategic importance of the country in which he lived was totally disregarded by Robert Ainslie, the ambassador, who clearly distrusted Baldwin.

The "Swallow" incident

He remained in Egypt, except for a brief visit to Constantinople in 1778, until 1779. Of the first year of his residence, little is known except that he was engaged in his private commercial activity. The first political incident in which he was directly implicated occurred at the beginning of 1777.

On 5 January 1777, the "Swallow" sloop arrived in Suez from Madras with three passengers who had urgent dispatches for the King's ministers and the Court of Directors in London.¹ The passengers were Dalrymple, Capper, and Dighton. They brought news of the revolution in Madras, and of the deposition of Lord Pigot.² Capper carried letters from the men who had replaced Pigot's admini-

¹ SP 97/53, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), Jan. 22, 1777.

² Sir George Pigot (1719-1777) was Governor of Madras. His own council turned against him because he wished to restore the ruler of Tanjore. He was arrested, and later died in prison.

stration; Dighton had dispatches from the nawab who favoured the new government; and Dalrymple, who had been deposed, had his own as well as Pigot's vindications.

When Ibrāhīm Bey, the shaykh al-balad, heard of the impending arrival of the vessel, he decided to allow it in, despite the ferman of 1774. Two days later, Baldwin visited him, and received further letters of recommendation for the passengers; Ibrāhīm also sent his own dromedaries to bring them to Cairo. But the Pasha, Muḥammad 'Izzat, gave orders that seals be placed on the luggage of the Englishmen at Suez.

The men made their way to Cairo where they stayed at Baldwin's house. It had been raining, and by the time they were in the house, they were so wet and uncomfortable that they decided to break upon the sealed luggage. Local suspicion was by now aroused, especially as the men seemed in a great hurry to continue their journey, having claimed that they were not carrying any merchandise. As the men were preparing to leave Cairo to make their way to Alexandria, they received orders that Ibrāhīm wished to see them.

The interview was cordial enough. They were served coffee, asked about world news in general, gently reproached for not staying longer in Egypt, and then finally dismissed. In the meantime, Baldwin was made to understand that the Bey was angry because he had received no thanks for the civility shown the men from India. After much deliberation, they agreed to buy Ibrāhīm a present; per-

mission was then granted them to depart.

But more impediments stood in the way. After the interview, Ibrāhīm had been told by his advisers that the Englishmen had come from diamond country and must have been smuggling untold treasures in their baggage. The Pasha was very angry that the seals he had ordered to be put on the luggage had been opened without his permission. So the Bey sent his officers to inspect the effects of the Englishmen, in spite of the fact that they produced a letter of introduction from the Nawab of Arcot. To add insult to injury, the dispatches addressed to the King and his ministers were opened and read.

Baldwin was helpless in any effort to defend his countrymen since he had no official title whatsoever. He was able to procure the release of the three men when the Egyptians were finally convinced there was no hidden booty; he then assisted in their departure from the country on 24 January.

He protested in very strong terms to Ainslie. Dispatches addressed to the King of England had been opened, and Englishmen had been put to an unfair ordeal out of which the only escape had been "presents" to officials.

On 28 February, the Ambassador accordingly presented a Memorial to the Grand Vezir complaining of the incident.¹ The Reis Efendi²

¹SP 97/53, Ainslie to Weymouth, March 4, 1777.

²The Ottoman equivalent of a Foreign Minister.

answered by giving the strongest assurances that he would punish the offenders and return all confiscated articles to the Ambassador, but confidentially admitted to the anarchic conditions of Egypt and the minimal influence of the Porte there.

An imperial command was issued, however, in March, and an officer was sent to Egypt to discipline the responsible officials.¹ Ainslie did not see fit to ask the Grand Vezir for an official apology; he could not find a precedent for such a case, and was obviously uneasy about possible repercussions.

Throughout the "Swallow" crisis, Ainslie behaved with great propriety, cautioning Baldwin about the illegality of the Red Sea trade, yet firm with the Porte about the indignities suffered by Englishmen. He was careful, however, not to aggravate the Ottoman officials, convinced that neither the English nor the French capitulations allowed for navigation in the Red Sea.² He was anxious for England to retain its growing strength in the Ottoman Empire in spite of the subversive foreign elements at work to destroy it.

He sent a verbal message to the Reis Efendi stating his personal uneasiness about the fact that ships flying the English flag as a flag of convenience for Ottoman subjects, namely Greeks

¹The Command was issued to 'Izzat Muhammad Pasha, the Governor of Cairo, and to the shaykh al-balad and all the beys. SP 97/53.

²SP 97/53, Ainslie to Baldwin (copy), March 14, 1777. Ainslie was to admit French rights of navigation later.

and Armenians, were continuing to arrive at Suez. The Reis Efendi sent back a "civil message", and the next day a Memorial addressed to Ainslie arrived.¹

The trade to Suez was condemned as obstructive to the holy route of Medina and Mecca. Other reasons for the banning of the route were attributed to the danger due to the "Urian"² tribes (numbering over one hundred thousand men) whose hostility to the Franks the Ottoman Empire would ultimately be responsible for; also, the income of Jedda would be affected since the Sharif of Mecca was totally dependent on it.

Reactions to the use of the Red Sea route

By now there were five English ships at Suez.³ They had arrived around 22 March, and had come from two different areas of the East Indies. They were rich in merchandise: the first vessel carried 650 bales of muslin; the second, the same, valued at 150,000 piastres; the third brought goods for merchants of Philopoppoli;⁴ the fourth and fifth had unspecified "India goods".⁵ A sixth ship

¹SP 97/53, Translation enclosed in Ainslie to Weymouth, May 17, 1777.

²See Appendix I for complete text.

³A corruption of the word 'urbān, i.e. nomads.

⁴The Memorial claimed to have knowledge of only three, but further notice from Egypt reported more.

⁵The modern town of Plovdiv.

⁶SP 97/53, Letter from Egypt to Ainslie, enclosed in his to Weymouth (May 3, 1777) n.d. Information attributed to Khalil Aga, a Turkish merchant.

was expected. The cargo had been allowed to be landed, although the Pasha asked for a 20⁰/o tax in order to discourage more ships from arriving.

When the vessels arrived, Baldwin was called up to the Citadel of Cairo¹ to see the Pasha who reminded him of the Porte's command to force back Frank ships to Jedda. Baldwin firmly insisted that no command could force back English ships, so a ferman should be issued allowing the cargo to be unloaded. When the Pasha resisted, Baldwin used the best argument available to convince him: he told him the value of the merchandise, "... which proved the most powerful argument..."² The Pasha issued the ferman, and agreed to do so for successive vessels.

Ainslie sent a copy of the Porte's Memorial to Weymouth³ and asked him for advice in how to deal with it. The answer was definite. The Court of Directors had already sent out orders to the presidencies forbidding trade beyond Mukhā and Jedda; the Ambassador was told to be firm in discouraging the illicit traders. Since there would not be sufficient time to warn the merchants, Weymouth asked Ainslie to have the Porte allow the ships in the Red Sea until 1 May

¹The official residence of the Pasha.

²SP 97/53, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), Aug. 10, 1777.

³Thomas Thynne, 3rd Viscount Weymouth, 1st Marquis of Bath (1734-1796). From 1768 to 1770 he was Secretary of State for the Southern Department, and was succeeded by Rochford. In November 1775, he was re-appointed to the same position. In March 1779, he was also Secretary for the Northern Department. He resigned the latter position in October of the same year, and the former in November.

1788. But the dispatch route had to remain open at all costs.¹

Consequently, Ainslie addressed a Memorial to the Grand Vezir on 26 August.² although he realised the great difficulty in obtaining a pass for packet boats with dispatches. The answer was long in coming, because, as the Reis Efendi told the dragoman of the Ambassador, there were more important affairs at the Porte to be discussed.

But the real reason for the delay, as Ainslie realised, was different: the Porte was hesitant about any commitments vis-à-vis Egypt, especially as a revolution in Cairo was in progress, and its outcome was still unclear. The fighting amongst the Beys during which Ismā'īl successfully claimed Ibrāhīm's position had great potential for the Ottomans; the disorder would ultimately weaken the Egyptians and give more power to the Pasha in Cairo.³ The British Ambassador feared, however, that if the Ottoman government in Egypt were to be strengthened, the Porte would be over-generous in its permission of English ships to go through the Red Sea, after which other countries would clamour for the same right, and then there would be no effective stop to the trade being resumed.

The reply to the Memorial was put off for so long that the Ambassador contemplated seeking an audience with the Grand Vezir,

¹SP 97/53, Weymouth to Ainslie, July 11, 1777.

²SP 97/53, Translation of memorial to the Grand Vizier, Aug. 26, 1777.

³The fighting had started when Murād Bey deliberately incited

especially since a number of verbal messages to the Reis Efendi seemed to have been of no avail.¹ Ramaḍān was first given as an excuse for the delay; later, it was that the Divan would have to decide on the problem, and it was at present occupied with other affairs.

The answer finally arrived on 30 November. The Porte could not allow free passage for English dispatches, but "... that whenever it shall be necessary to send any person from the Coasts of India with dispatches of importance for the English Court, on the messenger's arrival at the port of Judda, the Pashaw of that place shall take care to send him with his dispatches /to/ Suez on board some Turkish vessel trading to that Port, where the Custom Master and the other officers shall be careful to forward him on his way either to Cairo, or to wherever else he may be going..."² The Grand Vezir at the same time informed the Pasha in Cairo of the agreement reached with Ainslie regarding English ships coming from India: these vessels were forbidden to go to Suez. Mention

Ismā'īl to great anger by having a barge full of grain consigned to the latter stolen. On 14 Jumādā II 1191/20 July 1777, Ismā'īl, after a futile attempt to resolve his differences with Murād in a peaceful manner, was obliged to leave his home when he heard of a plot against him. The mamlūks immediately split into two warring groups, one around Ismā'īl, the other around Ibrāhīm and Murād. On 20 Jumādā II/26 July, Ismā'īl emerged victorious; Murād and Ibrāhīm were consequently forced to flee to Upper Egypt. On 22 Jumādā II/28 July, Ismā'īl was named shaykh al-balad. Jabartī, 'Aja'ib al-Āthar, vol. 2, pp. 10-13.

¹SP 97/53, Ainslie to Weymouth, Oct. 3, 1777.

²Egypt 5, Translation of the Porte's answer to... Memorial of August 26, 1777.

was not made of all Frank boats; the reference specifically indicated those of the English.¹

But there was no mention of permission to navigate until May 1778, so once again Ainslie applied to the Reis Efendi, this time threatening to go to the Grand Vezir if his request were not granted. He was finally promised that "... all ships belonging to His Majesty's subjects, who arrive at Suez, until the end of next summer will be permitted to enter there..."² The orders sent to Egypt could not be revoked; they would therefore only be suspended for the time being.

Ainslie's position from the beginning was clear: he was definitely hostile to Red Sea traffic. When he arrived in Constantinople in October 1776, he saw that Anthony Hayes, the chargé d'affaires, had already received complaints from the Reis Efendi concerning British ships at Suez. Hayes had made some attempts to argue the question, but actually did little more than report the prevailing attitudes to Weymouth.

The Ambassador's antagonism to the trade route was based on a number of considerations. Probably the most significant was the realisation of the critical position it would place the Levant Company in, whose trade was at a low ebb and to whom he felt ulti-

¹ SP 97/54, Translation of letter from Grand Vizier Derendeli Mehemet Pasha to the Governor of Cairo (Italian), Dec. 21, 1777. It distinctly refers to navi inglesi.

² SP 97/53, Ainslie to Weymouth, Dec. 17, 1777.

mately responsible. No less important was the desire to maintain and encourage the ascendancy of Anglo-Turkish relations which Ainslie felt he had done much to improve; he knew there would not be "people wanting" who would take advantage of any situation to set the Porte against England, and so wanted to weigh every measure carefully.¹ He also feared to incur the wrath of the rival East India Company which condemned the trade as injurious to its own market. Finally, he was not anxious to place the affairs of a country so remote and so politically anarchic as Egypt under the aegis of his Embassy.

The India products that were being sold in the Ottoman Empire by the Red Sea "adventurers" seriously jeopardized the Levant Company. It depended very much on the export of the same goods from England to the different parts of the Empire; if the illicit trade were to continue, sales would diminish in size, and prices would have to be lowered competitively. Furthermore, since the merchants who conducted this trade were not freemen, they were able to evade the duties the Company levied on goods that were consigned for sale to its factors. The Governor of the Company was also anxious to avoid the anger of the Porte, a natural consequence to the persistent trade, since the factors would be subject to countless hindrances in their commercial and personal lives.

¹ SP 97/53, Ainslie to Weymouth, May 17, 1777.

Opposition to the re-establishment of a British consulate

The Levant Company had had no official representation in Egypt since 1757¹ because of the uncertain political situation, and the exorbitant avarias levied on English traders. A few merchants continued to inhabit the country, however, for in 1773 John Murray appointed Constantine Macri as Consul in Alexandria. The Company protested against the appointment despite Murray's determination, and disclaimed all responsibility and interest in Egypt.² Contrary to his predecessor, Ainslie saw no reason to revive the position and pointedly ignored mentioning the existence of Baldwin to the Company. Confident of the latter's viewpoint, he was able to assure Baldwin that if he could convince London of the importance of a consulate in Egypt, he would "gladly concur".³

From the beginning, Ainslie seemed to have taken a dislike to Baldwin's authoritative and often presumptuous tone. Aside from the obvious disapproval of the merchant's activities, he showed a marked distrust of Baldwin that he often scarcely disguised. The Ambassador's letters to the latter were always written in a very sarcastic, aloof fashion, not characteristic of his otherwise diplomatic writings.⁴ He half-heartedly offered to protect Baldwin

¹ In 1754, it ordered the closing of the consulate in Cairo. But it was not until 1757 that the Consul left Egypt. Wood, op.cit., p.166.

² SP 105/120, Company to Murray, Aug. 17, 1773. Also, ibid., March 1, 1774.

³ SP 97/53, Ainslie to Baldwin (copy), Jan. 27, 1778.

⁴ An example of the Ambassador's almost hypocritical attitude is

when the latter asked for it, but quickly and sharply censured him when reports of a conversation with the Pasha of Cairo reached Constantinople in which the merchant had referred to himself as the British Consul.¹

Since the establishment of a consulate in Cairo was unnecessary to the Ambassador, he did not concern himself with the subject beyond the realization that a paid agent there would be able to keep him informed of local events. For this purpose he employed Brandi² of Alexandria despite Baldwin's repeated offers for the same services. But Baldwin felt the strong necessity for an official British delegation in Egypt. He was not beyond recognizing the political importance of such an establishment; however, it was not until a later date that he formed a definite opinion of the strategic position of the country he was living in. His motives at first were to a large extent personal and based on commercial considerations.

One of the main stumbling blocks to his practice as a merchant in Cairo was the tyranny of the Chief Customs Officer, Antūn Kassīs

seen when, writing to a third person, he referred to the Consul in Smyrna, to whom he addressed himself with great respect, as "a dirty fellow, ... over-run with the vice of this country".
FO 261/3, Ainslie to Keith, July 3, 1777.

¹ Baldwin assured Ainslie that the Pasha misunderstood; he had merely mentioned his consulship in Cyprus.

² An Italian tailor who lived in the former English factory in Alexandria, and who occasionally acted as agent for the British.

Fir'awn, who apparently had been designated by John Murray to act as protector to the English traders.¹ He obviously took great advantage of this position, acting in a most "unfair and tyrannical way" towards Baldwin and those members of the Levant Company that traded with him.²

Baldwin asked Ainslie more than once to relieve Fir'awn of his functions as protector. The Customs official insisted that the British Ambassador alone could ask him to discontinue his services since it was a British Ambassador who requested and authorized these duties. Ainslie refused to do anything without first consulting the Levant Company, since there must have been a good reason for the arrangement. He was reluctant to admit that Baldwin had any authority, for, while he wrote to Fir'awn at intervals, requesting the alleviation of certain taxes, he did not mention the Customs Master's protective rights.³ Baldwin continued to insist that someone else be granted the privilege of British protector in Egypt, for Fir'awn was a ruthless and uncooperative official whom Ainslie would never be able to censure. "If he takes the least disgust, he excites people to disputes, and judges of them

¹There is no evidence today of a letter Murray might have written Fir'awn.

²SP 97/53, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), Jan. 22, 1777.

³FO 261/3, Ainslie to Kassis (Italian), Jan. 27, 1778. Fir'awn was referred to as Kassis by Baldwin and Ainslie.

himself."¹ His representative in Alexandria was even worse, extorting extraordinary amounts from the English captains. The only person one could complain to would be his superior in Cairo; in short, the situation was intolerable.

Thus Baldwin was made to suffer a great deal which he was willing to put up with not, as he said, because of his "tameness or degeneracy of spirit", but to prove his ability to stand in opposition to those who disapproved of English trade in Egypt. If his commercial activity were able to prosper under such difficult conditions, it would undoubtedly thrive if it were properly supported. So he resigned himself to the fact that "... with patience I must give up my freedom to a Greek".²

But his spirit remained undaunted. "I shall go on in the same prudential line that I have adopted from the beginning, and at my retreat give up the establishment to the most fallacious notion that ever was conceived: of the impossibility of establishing an advantageous commercial intercourse with Egypt."³

¹SP 97/53, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), June 24, 1777.

²Ibid. The reference to Fir'awn as a "Greek" was inaccurate; it probably indicated that the Customs Master belonged to an Eastern church.

³Ibid.

Baldwin's Relationship with the East India Company

Aside from the opposition of the Levant Company and Ainslie, Baldwin also faced that of the East India Company. The latter regarded the Red Sea trade as a hindrance to its monopoly on India products. It also deplored the fact that many of the Red Sea merchants were not members of the Company, and were often not even Englishmen, but Greeks or Armenians. It realized the efficiency of the route for the expedition of dispatches, however, and Baldwin's only appointment was as agent for the purpose of assisting the messengers between Suez and Alexandria.

Baldwin's relationship with the East India Company was highly complicated and most unclear. His appointment as agent was never properly defined; instructions were confusing and often ambiguous. Baldwin, eager to win the acclaim of at least one body of officials, did his utmost to serve the Company, very often at great personal effort and expense. And for a long time, his efforts seemed to pass unnoticed and unremunerated.

When he was preparing for his departure for Egypt in 1775, he was asked by the Company to act as an agent to forward packets to and from England. For the reimbursement of expenses, the Company told Baldwin it would "... thankfully discharge to your order such small expence as may be thereby incurred..."¹

¹Egypt 5, Secretary to Baldwin, May 25, 1775.

In 1776, he was referred to as "H.M. Consul at Cairo",¹ and later reprimanded because he had demanded reimbursement; he was told it was "... the practice here to account annually for disbursements made ... and that it will be acceptable to the Court to continue such method..."² Baldwin continued to aid the dispatch route with great enthusiasm although the Court of Directors did not seem deeply appreciative. The first major clash between the two occurred in the latter part of 1777.

A packet of letters from London arrived in Egypt with a delivery note indicating it should go on the "Swallow" by express delivery. If the ship was not at Suez, and was still in the Red Sea, Baldwin was instructed to follow the vessel and ensure the speedy arrival of the dispatches since they were of great importance and very urgent.³ If the "Swallow" was not at all available, the packet had to be returned to London.

The "Swallow" had left Suez by the time the dispatches arrived, and could not be followed in the Red Sea. Baldwin therefore took it upon himself to hire a boat at considerable expense⁴ and send it to India, since he felt the information contained in the

¹ Egypt 5, East India House to Baldwin, Sept. 6, 1776.

² Ibid., Nov. 26, 1776.

³ Ibid., April 1, 1777.

⁴ The cost was 18,000 Turkish dollars, at the rate of 2s. 6d./dollar. The total amount that Baldwin paid was about £4,500. Ibid., Sept. 19, 1777.

dispatches concerning the reinstatement of Lord Pigot was vitally urgent. The Company was angry; not only did it refuse to pay for the vessel, but it also admonished Baldwin; it forbade him "... entering into any such engagements on behalf of the Company without special orders".¹

There is no doubt that the Company had not authorized Baldwin to take such measures as he saw fit for the expediency of the dispatch route. He had previously asked under what circumstances he could send special messengers with urgent letters; he was told that when the letters were going to India, the Court of Directors would inform him what to do, and when they were going to England, he was to decide for himself.² The "Swallow" case obviously came under the former stipulation, and the Court of Directors was unsympathetic to his petitions and justifications, refusing to reimburse him for the expenses incurred.

This was to be the first in a long series of disputes on the question of Baldwin's remuneration. His salary was never clearly fixed in advance, and whenever he presented his list of expenses, it was invariably disputed and finally cut down. Not only were the actual fees debated, but also the basis for the rate of exchange by which he was to be paid. The Turkish dollar was

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., April 1, 1777.

valued at 2s. 2d. to 2s. 6d. in the Ottoman Empire,¹ but the Court of Directors decided it would pay Baldwin at the London rate of 5s. to the dollar. This was especially infuriating to Baldwin since he knew that the Consul (Abbott) in Aleppo was being reimbursed at the local rate of exchange.² In June 1778 he informed the Court that unless an adequate rate of exchange could be agreed upon, he would be obliged to discontinue his services.

In November 1777, he was asked to forward packets to the Commander of the "Terrible Bomb" which was anchored at Suez, and, a week later, to help John Whitehill, a member of the Council of the Presidency of Fort St. George, and his companion John Boynton, in their hasty trip from Cairo to Suez in order to catch up with the "Terrible Bomb". Baldwin did so willingly, and asked for £1,134. 16s. 6d. as the costs of these services. The Court of Directors allowed only £600 to his solicitors.³

Baldwin's great chance to prove himself and win recognition from the East India Company as well as from all those who were opposed to his establishment in Egypt, came in 1778. His use of

¹ Egypt 5, Richard Willis to Sir George Wombell, Sept. 16, 1778.

² Egypt 5, Humble Petition to the Court of Directors from Baldwin, April 23, 1783.

³ Egypt 5, Extracts of minutes of the Court of Directors respecting Mr. Baldwin, Dec. 10, 1777.

the Red Sea route to send news to India of Anglo-French hostilities gave the British a head-start on the war that ended in the successful siege of Pondicherry in September, 1778.¹

Baldwin first heard of the Anglo-French rupture from Ainslie in May. He dutifully called together all the Englishmen who were in Cairo² and read the Ambassador's letter to them. His immediate reaction after that was to seek a quick method to convey the news to India. A private ship, the "Expedition", was anchored at Suez, so he asked its Commander, Captain Pruett, to delay departure for Bombay until further letters from abroad would confirm the news. The information was so important that, to ensure its safe arrival in India, he also enterprisingly sent another ship with more evidence on 14 May to Madras and Bengal. Baldwin assiduously collected as much documentation as possible to send on these vessels, including:

- a) a dispatch from a Venetian captain who had been in Morea where he met a Frenchman who had been sent by the Chamber of Commerce of Marseilles to inform French consuls of the impending war.

¹SP 97/54, Gov. Rumbold to Ainslie (copy), Nov. 1, 1778.

²Baldwin did not mention who these Englishmen were; it may be assumed that they were captains and members of the crew of ships anchored in Egypt. There is evidence, however, of two men who were living there at the time. Captain Jones, who had assumed the name of Robert Robinson, and who had served in the army of Muhammad Bey Abu'l Dhahab with another Englishman, Peter Harvey, was in Cairo in 1775. SP 97/51, Hayes to Rochford, Aug. 17, 1775. He was still there in 1777 when Irwin (see pp. 62-3) visited it. Irwin, Series of Adventures, vol. 2, pp. 67-8. The second man was John Antes who lived in Cairo from 1770-1782. A merchant who called himself an Englishman, Antes was actually "German", since his mother tongue was German. See John Antes, Observations on the manners and customs of the Egyptians.

- b) a dispatch from Brandi of Alexandria, who confirmed the presence of a Frenchman on a similar mission in that city.
- c) a letter from Leghorn, dated 9 April 1778, that spoke of the Franco-American alliance.
- d) several accounts that Baldwin had heard from French merchants in Cairo of the hostile detention of British ships in French ports, and of the recall of Ambassadors from Paris and London.¹

When Captain Barrington of the ketch "Nancy" asked for remuneration in India, he was refused. He returned to Cairo, presumably to petition Baldwin for payment, but was unfortunately killed in an undisclosed "foul" way.

In June, Captain Richard Matthews of the Secret Committee of the East India Company landed in Alexandria. Baldwin had received word from London to accompany him as quickly as possible to Suez, for he carried urgent dispatches for India. Baldwin once again exerted himself. He managed to rescue Captain Matthews when the latter was attacked in the course of his journey, and finally saw him safely on to the ship in Suez that carried him to Madras.²

¹ Egypt 5, Humble Petition to the Court of Directors from Baldwin, April 23, 1783. Also, SP 97/54, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), June 20, 1778.

² Egypt 5, Humble Petition to the Court of Directors from Baldwin, April 23, 1783.

Matthews, upon his arrival in India, wrote to London praising Baldwin's efforts and describing his establishment in Egypt.¹

Thus Baldwin sent word of the war to Bombay in June, to Fort St. George in June, and to Bengal in July. It was these combined efforts that gave the British advance warning, and enabled the victory of Pondicherry to be celebrated. He was aware of his contribution: "I had the satisfaction also to convey the first advices of the war in 1778 to the East Indies; by means of which we were enabled, to the astonishment of all England, when the news arrived, to expel the French from India before succours could reach them, and to add their possessions to our own."²

The Select Committee at Fort St. George recommended Baldwin to the Court of Directors "... for his giving them the earliest information of the public affairs in Europe".³ He was consequently awarded a "present" of £500. But he was not satisfied. He requested a regular, fixed salary if the Court wished him to continue his services. His solicitors petitioned Sir George Wombell (Chairman of the Court) on 27 January 1779 for a minimal salary of £500 per annum. The answer did not arrive until 23 March 1779 when the

¹ Egypt 5, Matthews to Peter Mitchell, June 12, 1778. Reference is made here to a forthcoming letter concerning Baldwin, of which no trace can be found.

² Baldwin, Pol. Rec., pp. 6-7.

³ Egypt 5, Extracts from minutes of the general court for the purpose of conferring rewards on... [those who]... contributed principally to the successes... obtained over the French in India, April 7, 1779.

the secretary, Peter Mitchell, promised Baldwin that the Court was considering "a handsome salary" for him.¹ He was finally officially accorded £500 per annum with £500 as the douceur for the Pondicherry contribution, but once again the terms were ambiguous, and Baldwin was dissatisfied, for during the year 1779 he was the recipient of only £142.10s. from the Company.²

Baldwin's commercial interests

But he did not rely on the meagre pittance of the East India Company for his livelihood. He continued to encourage his thriving branch of the Red Sea trade, ignoring Ainslie's wrath and repeated remonstrances, much in the same way the latter refused to recognise his numerous problems with Fir'awn.³

Ainslie was ever conscious of his rôle as promoter of English amity at the Porte, especially since he arrived there during the after-math of the Russo-Turkish War, and was keen to place Britain in a prominent place at the Ottoman Court. Whenever the Reis Efendi showed him personal attention and consideration he proudly communicated the incident to London, voicing the hope of maintaining the

¹ Egypt 5, Humble Petition to the Court of Directors from Baldwin, April 23, 1783.

² Ibid.

³ When Baldwin complained of the Fir'awn's actions as going against the intentions of the Levant Company, Ainslie's reply totally avoided the issue: how could this be, since the Company had repeatedly refused to interfere in all matters concerning Egypt?

same privilege indefinitely. He consequently regarded Baldwin's intrigues as detrimental to his plans, especially since the other foreign envoys at the Porte would have been only too eager to seize on any weakness to enhance their own respective positions.

He was, consequently, most annoyed at Baldwin's own report of how advantageous his commercial ventures were proving to be. He coldly replied, saying: "... unless you acquaint me with the nature of the commerce which you say might become so interesting as to merit particular attention, I cannot with any degree of propriety, make mention of it either to His Majesty's ministers or to the Levant Company."¹

The exact nature of Baldwin's business ventures may only be deduced, for he rarely supplied details of his commercial transactions. It is known, however, according to his own statement, that he imported goods from London for local consumption; £20,000 was the estimate he gave on his sales for the years 1775 to 1778.² During a period of two years he claimed to have freighted fifteen ships on the Alexandria-London route, with four (sometimes only two) in constant use.³ The other European merchants in Egypt were doing

¹SP 97/54, Ainslie to Baldwin (copy), April 29, 1778.

²SP 97/54, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), June 20, 1778.

³SP 97/54, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), Feb. 21, 1778.

exactly the same thing, and were constantly competing with him. Baldwin always felt at a loss in the competition, since he had not consular protection as they did, and often had to defend himself against repeated injustices.

The records of the Levant Company do not give evidence of the number of ships Baldwin claimed to have come to Alexandria. During the years 1775-1779, the impositions book of the Company accounts for only three ships that arrived in Alexandria:

- i) In June 1776, the "Fly" (Captain Stone), that loaded cotton and wool. It also went to Cyprus.
- ii) In June 1776, the "Peggy", that loaded raw silk, cotton yarn, and different kinds of gum. It also went to Alexandretta.¹
- iii) In May 1777, the "Olympia" (Captain Bett), loaded Senna, myrrh, cotton and gum. It also went to Alexandretta.²

The other ships Baldwin employed were obviously not English or in any way connected with the Levant Company. He made a number of references to Venetian captains;³ also, the British chancery register at Constantinople during the years 1779-85 contains ac-

¹The modern town of Scanderoon.

²SP 105/170, Impositions Book, 1775-1785.

³See above, page 53.

counts of the disputes some of his associates had concerning vessels from Venice. So it may be deduced from these that he hired Venetian boats for his import-export trade ; they probably went to other ports besides London.

He was not the only Englishman trading in Egypt, despite the fact that he alone was a resident. Although the Levant Company totally discouraged anything to do with the country, mention is occasionally made of captains from India and England who complained of high taxes. Records also indicate two known cases of Englishmen trading in Egypt. The first concerns a Timothy Goldsmith. He applied to the Privy Council in January 1777 for permission to export one hundred barrels of gunpowder to Alexandria. His application was referred to the commission for Trade and Plantations who approved of the request.¹

The second concerns a report of a dispute between two English merchants in Cairo in 1777. John Robinson² and William Shaw agreed on 27 March that the latter would buy from Baldwin, "agent and broker" of the former, 780 bags of saltpetre. Four days later, it was further agreed that Shaw would buy pepper and other products that were to be delivered in Suez. The form of payment to be made

¹CO. 391/84, Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, January 28, 1777.

²Robinson was recommended to Baldwin by Warren Hastings. Add. Mss. 29139 f.17, Baldwin to Hastings, July 5, 1777.

to Baldwin was to be partly in gold and partly a bill of exchange on Dalton and Martin of Bombay. But Shaw was unable to fulfill the bargain, and Robinson consequently did not deliver the goods. The dispute attracted the attention of the foreign merchants of Cairo who, without being asked, decided to judge the case. On 9 June they¹ signed a paper that Shaw was in the right. Robinson was asked to pay a sum of 2,500 German crowns as a penalty.²

Baldwin's commercial activity also included active participation in the Red Sea trade. He was the agent in Egypt for a group of Bombay merchants, William Hornby, Hunter, Fell and Ives.³ They shipped calicoes, muslins, and other unspecified India products to Suez, which after paying duties, Baldwin sold in Egypt and other parts of the Ottoman Empire. He consigned these goods to John Abbott and Richard Willis, independent English merchants of Constantinople, and to the prominent house of Lee and Maltass of Smyrna.

The process of consigning goods from Egypt to different towns of the Empire was complicated by the system of import duties.

¹The foreign merchants were: Rosa, Pini, and Rosetti of Venice, and Autran and Magallon of France.

²Add. Mss. 29199 f.75, "A short and impartial detail of a dispute subsisting between Mr. John Robinson and Mr. William Shaw now in Cairo." 1777.

³SP 105/187. Extracted from register of British Chancery of Aleppo, Bombay, Jan. 4, 1780. Deposited in British Chancery register, Constantinople.

When the merchandise arrived in Egypt Baldwin, upon paying the 20^o/o duty, was issued a "cochet" or tezker¹ which should have been valid in all parts of the Empire. But the lack of cohesion between Egypt and the Porte was reflected in the demand for further taxation when the goods arrived in Smyrna or Constantinople. Baldwin and his associates complained bitterly of this to Ainslie, who after much negotiation with the Porte was able to reach a compromise: the duty paid in Egypt would be refunded upon payment of a second duty in Constantinople. To ensure this, the second duty would be deposited in the British Chancery for safe-keeping until word arrived from Cairo that the money there had been refunded.²

More of Baldwin's commercial activity can be ascertained from the post-1779 period. However, a few details may be gathered from passing remarks in dispatches, and occasionally from pages of the Chancery register in Constantinople. Ainslie inferred in a vague fashion more than once that Baldwin's India trade involved aiding Englishmen from Bombay in transmitting their fortunes to Europe. Also that the capital for this trade was not entirely his own; he promised sizeable dividends to investors.

There is record of a bill of exchange that Baldwin made out on 8 March 1777 on the house of Cazalet and Cooke of London

¹The tezker or certificate was designed to protect the merchant from further exactions on the same goods. Gibb and Bowen, Islamic Society and the West, vol. 1, part 2, p.15, n.3.

²SP 97/53, Ainslie to Weymouth, May 17, 1777.

who might have been his agents since they imported the goods carried on the Levant Company ships.¹ The bill was made to a James Reynold who reported that Cazalet and Cooke were only able to honour 30⁰/o; he retrieved his money by a sale Baldwin made in Leghorn of a large amount of coffee. So it is not unlikely that the India ships going to Suez loaded coffee at Mukhā which was then passed overland and sold in Europe.

According to Ainslie, Baldwin considered the possibility of having Russian ships navigate the Red Sea. The ambassador mentioned a Mr. Froding who at one time had been actively engaged in the Suez trade, and had later been employed by Baldwin for that purpose. Froding was established in Constantinople. On 3 April 1781, he left the city and sailed for Russia via the Black Sea with a French merchant.² This aroused the suspicions of Ainslie who was convinced of a Russian plan that somehow involved Baldwin.

Although an exact assessment of the gains and losses of Baldwin's establishment cannot be made, there is little doubt that it was lucrative. When Eyles Irwin³ visited him in Cairo in

¹ See above, page 58.

² FO 78/2, Ainslie to Hillsborough (cypher), April 14, 1781.

³ Eyles Irwin (1751-1817), oriental traveller and writer. In 1771, he became the superintendent of the East India Company's grounds in Madras. He supported Lord Pigot during the uprising in 1776, and was suspended from his duties as a result. He left India in early 1777, and sailed to England via the Red Sea. He published an account of his travels in A Series of Adventures in the course of a voyage up the Red Sea, (in Letters to a Lady).

September 1777, he was very much impressed with the generosity and hospitality shown him, as well as Baldwin's astonishing ability to speak fluent Arabic. Irwin also remarked that the position of Britain in Egypt seemed to have gained immeasurably with the revival of the Red Sea trade: "It is many years since the English trade has declined in the Levant. Their ships of war no longer ride triumphant in these seas... But the spell is revived. The English have found their way into the Red Sea..."¹

Further proof of this was in Baldwin's persistent defiance of Ainslie's orders to stop the trade, for in the former's own statement, he proudly claimed: "We composed our bowl of the Ganges, the Thames, and the Nile, and from the top of the Pyramid drank prosperity to England."²

Continued Use of the Route:

As the tension between Ainslie and Baldwin continued to grow, so also did the animosity of the Porte towards the use of the Red Sea route. In May 1778, the Reis Efendi made a "heavy complaint" against the increase of the trade between India and Suez. He had a report that there were thirteen Frank ships at Seuz at the time. Ainslie acknowledged the presence of only eight, but assured the Porte that 1778 would be the last year for the

¹ Irwin, Series of Adventures, vol. 2, pp. 127-8.

² Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.6.

traffic.¹ The Reis Efendi was extremely angry, answering whether there were eight or eight hundred was the same thing; no ship would be allowed past Jedda any more.

But Ainslie was aware that a "knot of adventurers", Greeks, Armenians, and Europeans, including Englishmen, were negotiating with the beys of Egypt for permission to continue the illicit trade, and it was they who were responsible for the eight ships at Suez.²

This coincided with a revolution in Cairo, and the reinstatement of Ibrāhīm Bey as shaykh al-balad, in February 1778. Once again the Ottomans were faced with grave opposition in Egypt, for the precarious political balance of the mamlūks had quickly disintegrated. Ismā'īl Bey had to leave Cairo and go to Syria because his principal allies, Riḍwān Bey and Ḥasan Bey al-Juddāwī had defected to the camp of Murād and Ibrāhīm. When the Pasha named Ibrāhīm shaykh al-balad on 21 Muḥarram 1192/19 February 1778 the mamlūks divided into two main groups: the 'Alawiyya and the Muḥammadiyya. Open fighting between the two resulted in the defeat of the 'Alawiyya, and the preponderance of Murād Bey as the leader of the Muḥammadiyya.³

¹SP 97/54, Ainslie to Weymouth, May 4, 1778.

²SP 97/54, Ainslie to Weymouth (cypher), August 3, 1778.

³Jabartī, op.cit., vol. 2, pp. 21-2.

Ainslie reported a Council Meeting at the Porte on 24 August during which Egypt was the central topic for discussion. It was decided to recall the banished Reis Efendi, Ismā'īl Bey, to serve as Pasha of Cairo because Ibrāhīm had once been his slave.¹

By December 1778, the fury of the Porte was frightening to Ainslie. The Reis Efendi, together with three officials, called Pisani, the Embassy dragoman, to file a new complaint. The Shaykh of Mecca reported an English ship loading coffee at Mukhā and making off with it to Suez. The ship had left India in the Spring, so it obviously must have known of the new orders forbidding the trade. Ainslie instructed Pisani to reply that he was totally ignorant of the affair. But he privately thought the story unlikely. He knew that the East India Company had published the prohibition, and its orders would not be disobeyed easily. Furthermore, the cargo on the vessel would not sell sufficiently to cover the expense of the voyage. He therefore suggested to the Reis Efendi that the Shaykh of Mecca might have been mistaken.²

The next day the Reis Efendi informed Ainslie that since 1778 was drawing to a close, the Porte had decided to forgive England because of its lasting friendship with the Empire. However, the Divan would be meeting in a few days to discuss the illicit

¹SP 97/54, Ainslie to Weymouth, Sept. 3, 1778.

²SP 97/54, Ainslie to Weymouth, Dec. 17, 1778.

trade; the Ambassador would be told immediately of the resolutions taken there.

Baldwin in Constantinople

In the meantime, Baldwin decided to go to Constantinople to persuade Ainslie to agree to the importance and possibilities of the trade, and consequently to use his influence at the Porte to have it allowed. So he arrived at the end of 1778. He conversed extensively with the Ambassador, but was met with polite but stubborn resistance to all his ideas.

Baldwin warned Ainslie that no orders from the Companies or the Porte would be able to discontinue the activity at Suez, since there was far too much money involved. The trade was one of the few expedients left for the English merchants of India to transmit their fortunes to Europe.¹ Moreover, the Beys were interested, and seemed eager to encourage it. If the Porte continued to ban it, the traffic would persist, but probably by flying Turkish colours.

When the reasons failed to convince Ainslie, Baldwin used another method of persuasion that only added to the distaste of the Ambassador. He reported the incident to Weymouth: "For my part, my Lord, I should be a considerable gainer, by the establish-

¹Ibid.

ment of an English navigation in the Red Sea; and had I chose from the beginning to authorize a British subject to act as Consul... I was offered ten thousand piastres per annum." He went on to say: "I am ashamed to add that notwithstanding my refusal, a much larger sum has been proposed to engage me to represent this trade in a favourable light to the interests of Great Britain."¹

Ainslie decided that the best path to follow would be to placate the shrewd merchant, and have him return to Egypt. He therefore gave Baldwin the "strongest command" of protection that a person without a consular patent could hold, making him his vekil² until the Levant Company wished to grant him a consulship.³ The Ambassador also promised to write to Fir'awn and revoke John Murray's commission.⁴ Finally, he gave Baldwin the right to appoint an agent at Suez in order to discourage the persistent trade, and also to help in the overland journey to Alexandria of dispatches coming from India.

The next day he added more concessions. He sent another letter protecting Baldwin and any Englishmen who came to Egypt

¹SP 97/54, Ainslie to Weymouth, Dec. 17, 1778.

²Agent, or representative.

³SP 97/55, Ainslie to Baldwin, Feb. 25, 1779.

⁴He was careful to remind Baldwin of his right as Ambassador to receive 50^o/o of what Fir'awn had taken from English traders and asked him to enforce the regulation. Ibid.

"... from personal insults, and every species of violence and injustice".¹ The appointment of vekil authorized Baldwin to "... receive the same emoluments as if ... he ... had a Consulary Patent."² In return, the merchant had to do all in his power to suppress the illicit trade, and at the same time keep the Ambassador informed on political developments in Egypt.

Thus Ainslie succeeded in turning the tables on Baldwin. He ably employed the same method the latter had used on him; where bribery of a pecuniary nature was uninteresting to the ambassador, it seemed to work on the merchant because the promises were of titular honours. Baldwin returned to Cairo confident of his new-found security, and totally unaware of his Ambassador's confrontations at the Porte on the subject of his means of livelihood.

Ainslie was more suspicious than ever of Baldwin's unscrupulous ways, and was willing to believe almost any derogatory information about the merchant that came to his ears. He seemed convinced that Baldwin had asked for his protection in order to be refused; he would then feel justified in unhesitatingly seeking the protection of the Holy Roman Empire, perhaps even to the extent of accepting the Austrian vice-consulship in Egypt. Ainslie

¹SP 97/55, Ainslie to Baldwin, Feb. 26, 1779.

²Ibid.

realized this was only a suspicion, but promised Weymouth:

"I shall act in consequence of this suspicion, in such a manner as to leave him no just pretension for infringing his engagements to the Levant Company..."¹

He furthermore believed that Baldwin, during his stay at Constantinople, had been "tampering" with the French Ambassador in an attempt to make the Red Sea trade permissible. This was undoubtedly the gravest suspicion, for the French were recognized by both Ainslie and Baldwin to be the arch-rivals of England in the Ottoman Empire.

French activity

Yet the activity of the French in Egypt up to 1779 never seemed to be a great concern to Ainslie, although he occasionally showed a wariness of their power and prestige. At the onset of the Red Sea problem in 1777, Ainslie, in a state of confusion, wrote to Weymouth asking for advice, questioning the possibility that another nation, France or Russia, could be involved in the trading life of Egypt in general, and that of Suez in particular.² However, Baldwin's report to him in January 1777, of a person in Cairo from a "very powerful nation" who was inquiring about the use of the route seemed to pass almost unnoticed.³

¹SP 97/55, Ainslie to Weymouth, Jan. 4, 1779.

²SP 97/53, Ainslie to Weymouth, Feb. 21, 1777.

³SP 97/53, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), Jan. 22, 1777.

In August 1777 he was curious about the Frenchman, M. Melon, who had spent some time in Constantinople. A secretary to the French Ambassador in Rome, he had come straight from France to Constantinople where he stayed for a month. He then left on 12 August for Smyrna, and then to Cairo.¹ A month later, an officer in the Seraglio reported to Ainslie that Melon had presented a Memorial to the Porte asking that the French be given the same arrangements as the British for trade in Egypt, offering to pay for the privilege in "presents". The refusal was given with much "ill-humour".²

Ainslie also knew that Baron de Tott,³ the new Inspector-General of French trade in the Levant, had travelled to Cairo. He carried with him many presents for the Beys in order to ensure the lowest possible duties for French merchants, and had arranged for the advent of a French ship from Bengal to Suez in the Spring of 1778. Rather than expressing alarm at the French concern with Egypt, Ainslie's main reaction seemed to have been exasperation; the French demands would only serve to make those of the British more difficult to obtain.

The Ambassador was at a constant loss at the Porte because of limited funds. He earnestly pleaded for more, once remarking that the French always seemed to be ahead of him because of the

¹SP 97/53, Ainslie to Weymouth (cypher), Aug. 18, 1777.

²SP 97/53, Ainslie to Weymouth (cypher), Sept. 17, 1777.

³Baron François de Tott (1733-1793). From 1755 to 1763 he lived in Constantinople where he assiduously studied the language and political

gifts they made to the Ottoman officials. The authorities at the Porte all had gold snuff-boxes "made in France".¹ He had already spent £200 from his private purse in less than two years at Constantinople, and still needed money for presents and secret service.

In December 1778 he reported that Melon had reached a trade agreement with the Beys. The Frenchman's valuable presents seemed to have arranged the affair in such a way as to "... screen the French merchants established in the different scales of this Empire from the resentment of the Porte".² The French would be able to revoke their consuls in Egypt, and to free their establishments there from the protection of the Porte, so as not to be encumbered by any responsibility. Ainslie's main concern now seemed to be that France would employ the moneyed men of Bengal and the East Indies to fit in with their own national economic plans, especially since Saint-Priest, the French Ambassador, had acknowledged French intentions to navigate the Red Sea.

set-up of the Ottomans, after which he was named Consul in the Crimea. In 1776 he was made Inspector-General of the échelles of the Levant.

¹SP 97/54, Ainslie to Weymouth (cypher), May 4, 1778.

²SP 97/54, Ainslie to Weymouth (cypher), Dec. 17, 1778.

The Hatti Sherif of 1779

The authorities of the Porte were not unaware of the persistent machinations of the Europeans to defy their repeated admonitions about Red Sea navigation. When the Divan met in December 1778, it decided yet again that no more Frank vessels would be allowed to sail past Jedda after the passing of the year. As a consequence of this decision, a Hatti Sherif was issued at the beginning of 1779, and a copy was delivered to Ainslie.

It was worded in very strong terms. "The Sea of Suez is destined for the noble pilgrimage of Mecca. To suffer Franks ships to navigate therein, or to neglect opposing it, is betraying your Sovereign, your religion, and every Mahometan. And all those who dare transgress will find their punishment in this world, and in the world to come. It is for the most important affair of state, and of religion, that this express and irrevocable command is issued."¹ It was addressed to the Pasha, the judges, the Beys, the chiefs of the four sects, the doctors of the Azhar, the captains and officers of the seven ojaks² of Cairo.

This edict was to govern British affairs in Egypt in 1779. Its tone was most emphatic, and, on paper at least, re-instated Ottoman authority in the country. Its main reference, however,

¹Translation of Hatti Sherif to the Government of Egypt. Available in Baldwin, op.cit., pp. 8-12, SP 97/54, and Egypt 5. See Appendix II for complete text.

²Military corps.

was to the British and their vessels, going so far as to declare that the Porte had Ainslie's approbation that "... in case of contravention, the effects of those who should contravene might be seized, their vessels confiscated, the crews of the ships and the supercargo imprisoned and condemned to perpetual slavery."

This was obviously intended to censure only the British. Ainslie did not object to the severity of tone, a fact that is most surprising. Even the Levant Company, long opposed to Egyptian trade, was alarmed at the threats directed at Englishmen, and warned the Ambassador of the possible repercussions and implications of the statement.¹

The edict had been preceded by a memorial delivered to Ainslie on 17 December 1778. It contained no clear prohibition to all Frank vessels, and seemed to refer to the English alone; it also had no clause for the permission of English dispatches to go through the Red Sea. So it was returned with an explanatory verbal message to the Reis Efendi. The corrected memorial was returned on 19 December, but still had no reference to the dispatches. The Embassy dragoman was sent to the Porte to ask for the permission. The request was refused for two reasons: the first, because a declaration made by the Sublime Porte should never be open to criticism; second, the request itself had already been

¹ SP 105/120, Governor to Ainslie, March 9, 1779.

regarded as inadmissible.¹ The Reis Efendi pleaded with Pisani not to ask for more, and to acknowledge simply receipt of the memorial, since further contact with the Sultan was totally out of the question. In exchange, Ainslie was given a verbal promise that during the coming summer British packet boats would be permitted to land at Suez provided they carried no merchandise.

Ainslie was satisfied with the state of events. It was not until six months later that it occurred to him that the English could continue to trade by flying foreign colours, most likely those of France. Although he had assured Baldwin that the French capitulations did not allow for Red Sea navigation, he was aware that this was not so.² He had thus jeopardized the security of his countrymen in an unsuccessful attempt to stop a commercial activity that he considered detrimental to the national interest.

The India trade continued to thrive in Egypt, but it had to be done with "extraordinary secrecy indeed".³ Packet boats arriving at Suez carried merchandise as well as dispatches; the former had to be smuggled carefully off board. Baldwin unashamedly wrote to the Ambassador of this, and complained if the Egyptian authorities hindered the passage of the dispatches and their bearers to Cairo and Alexandria.

¹SP 97/55, Ainslie to Weymouth, Jan. 4, 1779.

²SP 97/55, Ainslie to Mitchell, June 4, 1779.

³SP 97/55, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), April 30, 1779.

When Baldwin returned to Egypt on 29 April after his visit to Constantinople, he heard of two English vessels that had arrived at Suez. Two of the passengers, Captain Scott and Lieutenant Mills, were in Egypt for the conveyance of special news from India: the defeat of French settlements there. But the vessels that brought them also carried merchandise. So the two English officers were detained in Alexandria, although they were told that their goods could not leave the ships.¹ Infuriated, Baldwin wrote to Ainslie saying that two more ships were expected, one of them carrying the deposed chief of Chandernagore, M. Chevalier. "If the Firman which orders the passengers to be made slaves of, is to have effect, you may see Mons. Chevalier come to work in the arsenals of Constantinople."²

Ainslie obtained a safe passage, and two messengers from England were allowed to make their way to Suez and down the Red Sea in May.³ *f*

The Caravan Disaster

The next month, the most outstanding incident during Baldwin's first unofficial establishment in Egypt occurred. It was a

¹ It was Rosetti, the Venetian merchant of Cairo, who finally obtained their release which cost them a thousand dollars. Baldwin, A Narrative of Facts (henceforth Narrative), p.4.

² SP 97/55, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), April 30, 1779.

³ SP 97/55, Ainslie to Baldwin, June 2, 1779.

confused, chaotic event, disastrous for Baldwin and many other merchants, with great loss, both in prestige and money, for England. It was to mark the end of Baldwin's first, sporadic attempt to re-establish the English in Egypt.¹

Once again, it was concerned with the India trade. In May, two commercial ships flying Danish colours arrived at Suez. The first, the "St. Helena", was commanded by Captain George Moore, an Englishman, who had letters of recommendation and introduction from the Governor-General in Bengal to the Bey of Egypt. The Customs Master wrote two letters to Moore, promising his personal protection. The second, the "Nathalia" was under the command of a German, van der Velden, who had a letter from the Governor-General in Bengal to Baldwin; he instead established contact with the French trading house of Magallon, Noel, Olive et Cie. Both ships were the property of Englishmen who protected themselves by flying Danish colours.

The Shaykh al-Balad sent his own camels to take Moore's cargo to Cairo. The Customs official, however, insisted on charging double the usual tariff. An extra fee of 300 dollars per ship was made for anchorage.

¹The account of the incident is drawn from:

- i) SP 97/55, "Mr. O'Donnell's account of the treatment and conduct of the government and people of Cairo, to the Europeans who arrived at their port of Suez in the year 1779 - with the attestations of several gentlemen who were on the spot: to the troubles of such facts and circumstances as came within their knowledge." It is signed and approved by James Grant, James Hislop, A. Hammond, H. R. Sullivan, Cairo, Sept. 1, 1779.
- ii) Baldwin, Narrative.

When the passengers of the "Nathalia" saw that Moore's cargo and passengers were being escorted to Cairo, they were greatly encouraged to follow suit. Ten of the passengers left Suez on 15 June: they were John O'Donnell, Barrington, Jenkins, van der Velden, Chilly, two French brothers St.-Germain, Manonalki, an Armenian linguist, and two servants. On their first night out, they were attacked by three hundred Arabs, stripped naked of their clothes, robbed of their possessions, and left in the desert without food, water, or camels. Within a short time, seven of the men died, Chilly of wounds, the others from fatigue, thirst, and sunstroke. One of the St.-Germain brothers survived, and dragged himself to Cairo where he collapsed, but was soon revived.

John O'Donnell managed to escape. He had conducted a thriving business in India, and his goods on the "Nathalia" were estimated at 150,000 dollars. He considered the Red Sea trade to be the most efficient method to transmit his fortune to Europe. He decided to make his way back to Suez. On the way, he came across Captain Waugh of the "Britannia" packet, one of the three Bengal ships that had anchored at Suez recently. Together, they managed to return to Suez where they discovered that the stolen booty was being passed through on its way to Tor, the stronghold of the thieves. They decided first to return to their respective ships to refresh themselves after the

ordeal of the desert and then to attempt to retrieve the merchandise. The authorities of Suez forbade them to do this, and as an insurance that their orders be obeyed, arrested O'Donnell and kept him as a hostage. He escaped, however, and went on board the "Nathalia" which was anchored at port. A few days later he made his way to Cairo to join Baldwin who had anxiously awaited news of the missing cargo.

Some of the merchandise on the "Nathalia" belonged to Baldwin, so his concern involved personal interest as well as a dogged determination to uphold the rights of his countrymen. He probably realized from the beginning that he had to contend with the wiles of Carlo Rosetti, who had lived in Egypt for a very long period of time, had once been the political adviser of 'Alī Bey, and now enjoyed the personal friendship of Fir'awn. Baldwin saw that he would have to enlist Rosetti's help, since it was he who had used his influence with the Beys to release Scott and Mills.

After conferring with Rosetti, Baldwin decided that O'Donnell should petition Ibrāhīm Bey. The petition was written, translated, and shown to Fir'awn for his opinion; he approved it, and it was submitted.¹ The answer was long in coming, during which time O'Donnell anxiously urged the Customs Master to ask why Ibrāhīm Bey had not replied.

¹ Egypt 5, O'Donnell to Ibrahim Bey, July 8, 1779.

On 16 July, the Fir'awn went unexpectedly to Baldwin's house. He claimed to have come straight from the Shaykh al-Balad who had just found an opportunity to punish the thieves, for the merchandise had been discovered in an old house near Tor. Fir'awn suggested that Moore should return to Suez with a party of one hundred and fifty men from the government to act as escort. As Moore would be readying himself to go on board his ship, the Egyptians would take their leave of him, and sail to Tor to surprise the thieves.

The plan was immediately and rather naively accepted. In the meantime, news arrived that the thieves were within two hours of Suez, and had most of the treasure with them. They wanted peace, admitting the cause of the plunder was that the English had killed eight of their men. They had occupied the water-supply source of the city, and refused to budge until the government agreed to compromise the affair.

The Bey, angered at the ultimatum, decided to send the same group of soldiers who were to escort Moore to lay siege to the Arabs. But to ensure the success of the expedition, he asked for as many men as the English could spare to go to Suez in order to assess the number of the enemy. For this, the military would need letters of explanation from the commanders of the ships in Cairo to their men on board the vessels at Suez. The Englishmen

remaining in Cairo should be ready to leave in seven days; a desert meeting-place was fixed for the morning of 28 July.

After the army contingent left, and the Englishmen were preparing themselves for departure, Baldwin noticed that a young Venetian protégé of Rosetti who was to have accompanied the caravan was being delayed by Fir'awn. Mario Mutti was entrusted with about 30,000 dollars worth of goods belonging to Fir'awn and a rich Levantine merchant, Jacob Ṣawāyā. Both the Customs official and Rosetti urged the party not to miss the desert meeting on 28 July since Ibrāhīm Bey himself was to be there, but the young Mutti was not amongst the group. Baldwin, suspicious, insisted that the caravan should not leave until Mutti joined it, thus causing a delay that ultimately thwarted the plans of the plotters.

Early in the morning of 29 July, George Moore was arrested and taken up to the Citadel. Baldwin was urgently called to Rosetti who gave him further bad news: Ibrāhīm Bey had seized the caravan. His men had lured the Englishmen on board the ships at Suez off shore under the false pretence of having entertainment planned for them. The ships were plundered, and the passengers arrested and sent, two on a camel, through the desert to Cairo.

Rosetti suggested to Baldwin that he and Andrew Skiddy, another merchant, place themselves under the protection of Fir'awn. But Baldwin, realizing he had been trapped, adamantly refused.

"I laughed at every idea of security - I saw no alternative but to sell our lives like Englishmen."¹

The Englishmen were now at the complete mercy of the government of Egypt. They were made particularly aware of this when, the day before Moore's arrest, Ibrāhīm Bey's answer to O'Donnell arrived. It was encouraging, promising to return the stolen goods as soon as they were retrieved. It also claimed that the Shaykh al-Balad "... wrote to the Governor General of Bengall upon this business and you ought to remain at Cairo easy about this matter, as I hope in God, things will turn out successful."² The letter to Bengal had been given to Moore, but when he was imprisoned it was taken from him.

After a brief but fruitless attempt to obtain help from another Bey, Ibrāhīm Bey al-Wālī, Baldwin and his companions came up with a new plan. The latter were to go to Rosetti and complain about Baldwin, ask the Venetian to protect them, and then attempt to obtain a safe conduct to Suez from him. They would pay 70,000 dollars for this, the amount of money that Fir'awn owed Moore.

Rosetti was delighted with the apparent disloyalty to Baldwin. He negotiated with Fir'awn for the release of Moore within

¹Baldwin, Narrative, p.13.

²SP 97/55, Ibrahim Bey to O'Donnell (copy), n.d.

five days, and asked that all the Englishmen be allowed to return to Suez, except for the five young servant boys who had already been circumcised and enslaved.

The orders did not come. Instead, a new condition was presented: every Englishman in Cairo was to sign a bond of indemnity before he would be released. Baldwin was the first to enter Fir'awn's house for the signing of the bond, and was not surprised to overhear the Customs official and Rosetti chuckling delightedly over the humiliations they had caused the Englishmen.

The conditions for the treaty were difficult, but had to be accepted: they would never claim damages for the theft; they would never complain to the Porte of the treatment they received; they would never again come to Suez with a ferman permitting them to do so; they would pay the expense of any command that would come from Constantinople concerning their welfare; they would be responsible for any ship that arrived at Suez to obtain redress for the incident. The bond was signed by Major Ewen Baillie, Lieutenant John Hislop, Ensign Henry Sullivan, William Hammond, James Grant, John O'Donnell, Andrew Skiddy, George Moore, Duncons Campbell Chenaux, and Baldwin.¹

¹FO 78/1, "Copy of a bond drawn up in Arabic by order of the government of Egypt, obtained by violence from those who signed" (copy) (translation), n.d. See Appendix III for complete text.

In order to ensure the keeping of the bond, Baldwin and Andrew Skiddy were kept as hostages when the others were allowed to leave. Fir'awn offered Baldwin his release if he could detain any other two men, but since the others were in a hurry, he refused. The Englishmen, with the exception of the hostages, finally left on 28 August for India.

Baldwin wrote to Ainslie asking for a command from the Porte for his release which would also absolve the government in Egypt from any responsibility in the affair.¹ The Ambassador first heard of the troubles from Brandi who wrote him on 5 July.² It was not until the end of July that Baldwin wrote Ainslie³ presumably because he knew that his involvement in the commercial interests of the incident would not meet with the latter's approval.

Ainslie's fury knew no limits; once again Baldwin had compromised his position at the Porte. Nevertheless, he sent a memorial to the Grand Vezir on 24 September, protesting against the occurrences in Egypt, and asking for the release of Baldwin and Skiddy.⁴ He obviously exerted himself to the utmost, for in it he even referred to Baldwin as being "served with a royal order".⁵

¹SP 97/55, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), Aug. 31, 1779.

²SP 97/55, Brandi to Ainslie (Italian), July 5, 1779.

³SP 97/55, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), July 30, 1779.

⁴SP 97/55, Ainslie's Memorial to the Porte (translation), Sept. 24, 1779.

⁵The translation is also available in Egypt ... 5. ...

Departure of Baldwin from Egypt

Baldwin predicted the ineffectual quality of a command from the Porte, so he decided to escape, leaving Skiddy behind. He managed to slip out of Cairo and go to Alexandria where he smuggled himself aboard a French ship. He arrived in Smyrna in November from where he wrote Ainslie to apologize for the trouble the Ambassador must have taken on his behalf.¹

When Baldwin had time to gather himself, and think about the past seven months, he was able to see the entire situation clearly. The traders had been trapped from the beginning, and had been treated mercilessly. The Hatti Sherif of 1779 legally protected the Egyptian authorities for their behaviour; the British in Egypt had no protection whatsoever, since Ainslie disapproved of this activity. The cargo had by now probably been eagerly divided between Ibrāhīm Bey, Murād Bey,² Fir'awn and Rosetti. Baldwin saw the latter as the instigator of the whole trouble, who acted with the double motive of acquiring greater wealth and at the same time successfully ousting Baldwin from the country. On 15 December Baldwin delivered a pamphlet to Ainslie: A narrative of facts relating to the plunder of

¹ SP 97/55, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), Nov. 24, 1779.

² Murād's share of the booty was estimated at 120,000 dollars.

English merchants,¹ in which Rosetti's guilt was clearly stated. The Ambassador immediately confronted the Bailo with the accusation, and assured Baldwin that if Rosetti's participation could be proved, redress would surely be obtained.²

When the Porte's command for the release of Skiddy and Baldwin arrived, the Egyptians refused to let Skiddy leave. They probably, however, enabled his escape by subterfuge.³ He was helped by Richard Hughes,⁴ the Egyptian-born Englishman who remained in the country after the departure of Baldwin.

Baldwin remained in Smyrna until the end of 1779. While there, he married Jane Maltass, the beautiful, sixteen-year-old daughter of his agent, Henry Maltass. Early in 1780, he arrived in Constantinople in order to press his claims with Ainslie. He blamed the Ambassador to a large extent for his destitution, and was eager to prove his ineffectuality. The situation between the two closely resembled open warfare; each accused the other of cowardice and deviousness. A further series of incidents occurred in Constantinople that were to sever irrevocably the ties between them.

¹This was published in London in 1780.

²SP 97/55, Matra (Ainslie's secretary) to Baldwin (copy), Dec. 27, 1779.

³FO 78/1, Brandi to Ainslie (Italian), March 11, 1780.

⁴See Chapter II, below, p.92.

Baldwin's arrival in Constantinople coincided with the Spanish King's birthday which was being celebrated by the Neapolitan envoy, who was also the father-in-law of the French ambassador. A large dinner and dress ball was to mark the anniversary. When Ainslie only received a verbal invitation to the party, all the British residents loyally refused to attend. Baldwin, acting in open defiance of the boycott, went, taking with him Richard Willis, one of the English merchants of the city. The Ambassador's dignity was very much at stake; not only was Baldwin's action one of outright impertinence, but Willis had been a particularly good friend of Ainslie.¹

Baldwin refused to see Ainslie. He even went to the extent of refusing to bow to the Ambassador when they met in the street.² He instead spent most of his time in the French embassy, developing a strong friendship with Saint-Priest, the French Ambassador. Ainslie regarded this as "audacious and troublesome to the last degree" since the Frenchman had always openly shown his dislike of him.³ On 11 April the French Ambassador loudly declared that Baldwin would surely be able to obtain redress for Ainslie's actions,

¹FO 78/1, Ainslie to Hillsborough, Jan. 17, 1780.

²FO 78/1, Ainslie to Hillsborough, March 3, 1780.

³FO 78/1, Ainslie to Hillsborough, April 17, 1780. The French Ambassador further insulted Ainslie by treating Baldwin with the pomp he would a public minister.

for the merchant had confided in Saint-Priest, and told him of his great financial problems after the loss of the "Nathalia". Baldwin also spoke of the commercial benefits of the Suez trade, and so impressed the French Ambassador of its potential that he wrote a memorial on the subject, and sent it to France, strongly recommending French promotion of the route to India.¹

Baldwin accused Ainslie of renouncing the British capitulations by allowing the Hatti Sherif to be issued. He demanded a copy of the document, but was refused it by the officials at the British chancery.

On 29 March a General Meeting of the British Factory took place at the British embassy. Baldwin was officially not allowed to attend, since he had not been a resident of the city for six months. He forced his way in, however, and refused to obey Ainslie's orders to leave. When the factors insisted he leave, he recognized his defeat and left, "... with the most impertinent and insulting sneer...", taking his friend Willis with him.²

At last Baldwin realized that his presence in Constantinople was of no use; he would have to find other means to avenge himself. So he readied himself for departure. He appointed Willis as his

¹ Corr. Pol., Turquie, 166. Mémoire contenant les détails de ce que les anglois viennent d'éprouver en Egypte et de la traine odieuse dont les sujets du Roy été la victime. Enclosed in a letter to Bennin, Feb. 3, 1780.

² FO 78/1, Ainslie to Hillsborough, April 4, 1780.

attorney, giving him full powers to act on his behalf.¹ He also left behind some money and merchandise that Abbott, one of the merchants, later tried to claim from Willis saying that Baldwin owed him about 64,400 dollars.²

On 11 May 1780, leaving his wife in the care of Willis, he quietly left the city, accompanied by van der Steen, a Dutch painter.³ Their itinerary was to have been Aleppo, Basra, and India. But after reaching Antioch, they were attacked by thieves. Their baggage was lost, the two Tatars⁴ accompanying them were killed, and Baldwin was shot through the right arm.

Forced thus to discontinue his journey to India, Baldwin reconsidered his position, and resolved to return to England. His voyage home took him first to Vienna where Robert Murray Keith, the British ambassador, had been warned about his devious ways by Ainslie. The latter was actually worried that Baldwin would plan with Baron Thugut, the former Imperial ambassador in Constantinople, for a scheme to re-open the Suez trade.

But, far from being cautious with Baldwin, Keith was warm and hospitable.⁵ The merchant's connections in Vienna must have

¹ SP 105/185, Power of Attorney deposited in British Chancery on May 12, May 5, 1780.

² SP 105/185, Willis to Abbott, June 1, 1780.

³ FO 78/1, Ainslie to Hillsborough, May 17, 1780.

⁴ The official messengers at the Porte.

⁵ Add. Mss. 35522, Baldwin to Keith, April 5, 1781.

impressed the Ambassador; furthermore, the young Mrs. Baldwin, who was very beautiful, must have played an important rôle in the friendship Murray extended to her husband. Baldwin was acquainted with the Prussian Ambassador at Constantinople, Prince Kaunitz Kietberg, to whom he presented a memorial on the Red Sea trade; Peter Tooke, an English merchant of Constantinople had access to the text, and reported to Ainslie that it contained much material that would be harmful to the interests of the East India Company.¹ Baldwin and his wife also met with the Emperor Joseph who apparently was much struck by the beauty of the latter, and they were consequently eagerly received in Viennese aristocratic circles.²

From Vienna, the Baldwins went to Brussels where they had an introduction to Alleyne Fitzherbert, the British minister there, from Keith. On 8 April 1781 they went to London. For the next four years, Baldwin became actively engaged in attempts to seek compensation for his material losses of 1779, to seek recognition from the East India Company for his services as well as for the value of the Red Sea trade, and, finally, to promote an interest in the importance of Egypt, both strategically, and as a means to combat French influence.

¹FO 78/3, Ainslie to Hillsborough, April 12, 1782.

²See Jane Baldwin's Obituary, Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 12, London, 1839, pp. 656-8. The Emperor and Keith were not her only admirers; Dr. Johnson and the Prince of Wales were also impressed by her great beauty. She was to be known as "The Fair Greek" in London, and Sir Joshua Reynolds painted two full-length portraits of her, as well

On 19 February 1784, he sent a letter to the East India Company entitled: "Concerning Communication with India via Suez Isthmus",¹ in which he tried to prove the benefits that the Company could derive from the trade. First, he gave a resumé of the history of his residence in Egypt. Then, he put forward the proof of his argument by listing the precise quantity of India goods exported from England to the Ottoman Empire before, during, and after the period of British trade to Suez.² The conclusion drawn proved that more goods went to the Ottoman Empire from England during the height of the Red Sea trade.

There is little information available on Baldwin's other activities during the four-year interim in London. In April 1782, or thereabouts, he was involved in a dispute with Sheridan.³ Baldwin had been made to understand from a Captain Osborne that the post of Ambassador at Constantinople was vacant. Eager to qualify for such a coveted office, Baldwin tried to bribe Sheridan, for it, although he later denied having actually wanted to do such

as a sketch. Graves and Cronin, A History of the Work of Sir Joshua Reynolds, London, 1899, vol. 1, p.44.

¹Contained in Egypt. 5.

²See Appendix IV for the complete tables.

³R. B. Sheridan (1751-1816), statesman and dramatist. He became a member of Parliament in 1780. His first speech there was in defence of a charge of bribery which his defeated opponent had brought against him. In 1782 he was under secretary for foreign affairs.

a thing. He claimed that he had simply wished to do away with "... the concurrence of any other person whose interest was greater than mine, by an adequate compensation."¹ When Sheridan remained angry over the episode, Baldwin appealed to Edward Monkton, a member of Parliament, to intercede on his behalf. He explained: "It was the importance of the object that led me to propose what I did, and my meaning was no more, than to satisfy by some sort of compensation, the claims of a competitor."²

¹Add. Mss. 35118 f.35, Baldwin to Sheridan, April 5, 1782.

²Add. Mss. 35118 f. 37, Baldwin to Monkton.

Chapter IIINTERIM DURING THE ABSENCE OF BALDWIN:1779 - 1786Richard Hughes

After the "Nathalia" disaster of 1779, the only known Englishman left in Egypt was Richard Hughes. The first evidence of his existence occurred when he helped Andrew Skiddy¹ to escape from Mamlūk imprisonment, and thereafter claimed to be the sole Englishman in Egypt. He and Skiddy had obviously known one another previously, at least on a professional basis; Hughes had at one time shipped goods from Alexandria to Leghorn, the proceeds of which were to go to Skiddy.²

Little is known of Hughes's origins.³ He spoke of himself as a native of Egypt, but of English extraction.⁴ His mother tongue was Arabic, but he obviously knew English, and claimed to know many other languages. He was quick to seize the opportunity, as an English resident, to inherit Baldwin's position in Egypt as agent of the East India Company. Indeed, he insisted that Warren

¹See Chapter I, above.

²SP 105/187, Chancery register, Constantinople, Jan. 17, 1781.

³In 1760, the Dutch consul in Egypt, Robert Hughes, asked to become British consul, but his application was refused. SP 105/119, Levant Company to Hughes, Aug. 29, 1760. Richard Hughes may have been the son or younger brother of Robert Hughes, especially since the latter acted as agent for the British in the absence of a consulate.

⁴FO 24/2, Hughes to Lord Harrowby, Nov. 12, 1804.

Hastings had originally offered him the post when Baldwin received his appointment from London.¹ On 10 November 1779, he wrote to the Company asking to replace Baldwin as agent.² He also wrote to Ainslie to inform him of the possibility of the post. Abbott, an English merchant in Constantinople, told Hughes that the Ambassador had promised to recommend him to the Court of Directors, after which he would obtain a ferman for his protection.³

Hughes's correspondence with the East India Company and with Ainslie leaves the reader with a confused view of the reaction to and appreciation of his appeals. He wrote repeatedly to London and Constantinople, promising to keep out "busy foreigners" from matters pertaining to British interests in Egypt, and never seemed to obtain an answer. When he finally received word from London that the Company was going to appoint him agent,⁴ he immediately wrote to Ainslie asking for the protective ferman. The Ambassador procured the ferman, but only for Hughes's work as a merchant; even then, he refrained from sending it to Cairo until the Court of Directors officially notified him of the appointment.⁵

¹ Egypt 5, Hughes to the Court of Directors, Aug. 23, 1781. There is no conclusive evidence to prove this. The Warren Hastings Papers do have, however, reference to "I" who had offered to be the Company's agent at Cairo. Add. Mss. 29201 f.11, "Proposition: to open a trade to Egypt, to obtain a return of cash for manufacturers of Bengal", n.d.

² Egypt, 5, Hughes to Mitchell, June 22, 1780.

³ FO 78/1, Hughes to Ainslie, March 20, 1780.

⁴ Egypt, 5, Hughes to Mitchell, March 15, 1781.

⁵ FO 261/4, Ainslie to Mitchell, June 10, 1782.

Ainslie was obviously worried that the question of official representation would naturally follow, for once again he made it quite clear that the office of Consul in Egypt would be "highly dangerous in itself and in its consequence".¹ His bitter involvement with Baldwin was not yet forgotten, and he was anxious to avoid even the possibility of a similar situation recurring. Although he seemed to have no strong dislike for Hughes, he must have found it most expedient to ignore him in the hope he would soon give up and disappear.

In 1782, an incident occurred, the outcome of which illustrated Ainslie's attitude to the affairs of Hughes and the British in Egypt. Hughes was playing billiards with a French merchant in Alexandria when a quarrel broke out between the two.² The Frenchman hit Hughes, who immediately struck back. The relatively large and influential French community was so resentful of Hughes's action that he had to flee its wrath. He sought refuge in the home of Brandi who was the Consul for Holland, Sweden, Denmark, and Naples. The Frenchmen followed Hughes there and tried hard to evict him forcibly from the house. Brandi remained firm in his protection of the Englishman, knowing the latter would have been murdered otherwise. A young German who was at the scene of the quarrel vocifer-

¹ Ibid.

² The quarrel started because Hughes informed the Frenchman that the latter had to be very formal with him as he was about to be named British agent in Egypt. AE, B_I, 112, Extrait du registre de la chancellerie du consulat-général de France à Alexandrie, April 5, 1782.

ously disapproved the collective French action. He was pounced on, and had to seek refuge immediately at the Austrian consulate. Attempts were made to follow him there, but the Consul (Augustini) also stood firm, and was punished for this by insults, followed by an assault by five Frenchmen armed with swords, sabres and other deadly weapons. When the incident was reported to Constantinople, the Ambassadors of the countries involved were furious and immediately demanded satisfaction from the French ambassador. They were promised compensation.¹

When Ainslie reported the happenings to Fox,² he displayed the amazing detachment he had previously shown to Baldwin's welfare. He referred to Hughes as a person "who calls himself an Englishman", as if not convinced of his veracity. He also admitted that Hughes was an "utter stranger" to himself, despite the correspondence of the previous three years. He added, with very little reluctance, that he could do nothing for Hughes since there was no consulate in Egypt, and the unfortunate man had no consular rank or public privilege whatsoever.³

Hughes's relationship with the East India Company also bore a great similarity to that of Baldwin. The 1779 caravan in-

¹FO 78/3, Ainslie to Fox, June 25, 1782.

²Charles James Fox (1749-1806), Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

³FO 78/3, Ainslie to Fox, June 25, 1782.

cident seemed to have caused great hesitance to continue the passage of dispatches through the Red Sea. Yet the Court of Directors accepted the information. Hughes sent on the affairs of Egypt, and more particularly, on the foreign use of the Suez route. But no direct answer was made to his repeated petitions for an established position as agent, for these petitions showed his great anxiety for financial consideration.¹ Throughout his letters, Hughes presented well organized memorials on the importance of Egypt to the Company and to Britain; although it cannot be ascertained; it is most likely that his thoughts were the outcome of Baldwin's influence.

It was not only Hughes, however, who was eager for the position of agent for the East India Company. The trading house of Pini Brothers² offered for it in the early part of 1785. A merchant of Jedda had sent a packet of letters, one of which was addressed to the British Consul at Cairo. Pini Brothers opened it in the presence of Arnaud,³ a French merchant, and found letters addressed to the Court of Directors, so they forwarded them to Alexandria,

¹In 1800, Hughes was asked, however, by the Secret Committee of the Company to accompany Home Popham as Arabic interpreter to the Red Sea and Arabia. Hughes also accompanied Popham to London. FO 24/2, Hughes to Harrowby, Nov. 12, 1804.

²Venetian merchants of Cairo.

³Arnaud was described by the French consul in Alexandria as an Anglophile. AE, B₁, 3, Traithout to de Castries, May 30, 1778.

then to Marseilles. They followed this by an offer of their services.¹

Foreign Activity in Egypt

One of Hughes's unacknowledged services to the Court of Directors was to report foreign activity in Egypt. Brandi did the same for Ainslie, so between the two it is possible to draw up a fairly comprehensive picture of the comings and goings of the different nations during the years of Baldwin's absence, including the use of the Red Sea route, and how its commercial possibilities were instigating certain nations to show renewed and serious interest in Egypt.

On 10 March 1780, six Europeans arrived in Cairo from Suez; a Frenchman, St. Lubin,² with his secretary; three Portuguese; and, a German, sent from Bolts of Bombay with dispatches for Vienna.³ They had gone from India to Jedda where they took a Turkish boat for the journey to Suez.

¹ Egypt, 5, Brothers Pini to Court of Directors, Jan. 26, 1785.

² St. Lubin actually arrived in Cairo on 14 February, according to the French sources which may be assumed to be more accurate than those of Hughes. He was consequently involved in a dispute with an English captain in Mukhā. AE, B_I, 112, Traitbout to Minister, March 1, 1780.

³ FO 78/1, Brandi to Ainslie (Italian), March 11, 1780.

In March 1781, Hughes reported that he had received word from Alexandria that a Venetian ship had arrived. It had been loaded at Venice by two Englishmen, and was on its way to Basra.¹

Hughes then mentioned two Germans who were in Egypt in April 1781. He strongly suspected they were Dutch, for they carried dispatches for Batavia. He consequently warned British officials in Basra and Bombay of their presence, and also sent word to commanders of British ships at Mukhā and Jedda.² The first "German" arrived in Egypt on 29 March. Hughes visited him, and found him to be young, and very reserved, but he could only speak French and German. He claimed to be a merchant, but Hughes suspected he was an officer in disguise.³ He referred to himself as "Frederik", but Hughes saw a letter addressed to him that indicated his name was van Vasser.⁴ On 20 April he left Cairo for Suez.

The other man was George Tornbauer who was going to Aleppo and Basra; in May, Charles Smith (who had served as pro-consul in Aleppo from 1770-1772) informed Hughes that Tornbauer was in

¹ Referred to by Ainslie as the Imperial agent in India. Add. Mss. 35523 f. 155, Ainslie to Keith, Aug. 19, 1781. He had connections with the Red Sea trade.

² Egypt, 5, Hughes to Mitchell, April 29, 1781.

³ Egypt 5, Hughes to Court of Directors, April 29, 1781.

⁴ His real name was Capt. Frederik van Sawyer, and he had the Imperial command to pass through Egypt. Ibid., May 18, 1781.

Aleppo, staying with a French merchant.¹ It was not until August that Hughes could give a clear and definite statement as to the nationality of the two men: they were German, but in the employ of the Dutch. Hughes's warning to Smith in Aleppo had served a purpose; Tornbauer's trip to Basra was delayed, and he had to go by land to Persia.²

But the most important aspect of foreign activity was centred around the use of the Red Sea route. France and Holland seemed to make most frequent use of it for dispatches despite the sporadic passage of others. In early May 1782, Hughes announced the arrival of a French boat at Alexandria that had come from Marseilles. It carried a Lieutenant Colonel who seemed to be in a great hurry to reach the East Indies, and a "Mahrattah" person with three Indian servants. Hughes was not entirely sure whether their route was to be via Suez or Aleppo, but he was careful to state: "It really grieves me to the heart to see that their Honors pay so little attention to the valuable and speedy channel of the Red Sea ... our enemies the Dutch and French ... are continually profiting of it..." for dispatches.³

¹Egypt 5, Hughes to Mitchell, May 25, 1781.

²Egypt 5, Hughes to Court of Directors, Aug. 23, 1781.

³Home Misc. 162, Hughes to Mitchell, May 1, 1782.

While the French and Dutch were using Suez primarily for their dispatches in the years 1779-82, the Austrians were more interested in its use for the trade to India. Numerous Austrian attempts to woo the Egyptian officials into an understanding for this purpose were reported. To begin with, advances to the Customs Master, Antūn Fir'awn, were made. He was created an Imperial subject, and recognized as such by a berat from Constantinople. Two Beys in Cairo also acknowledged him as Austrian. Later, Emperor Joseph made him a Baron and Count Palatine.¹ Then followed a great exchange of gifts between the Customs Officer and the Emperor; the former received valuable porcelain, the latter horses and camels.² The Porte then issued a ferman by which it held itself responsible for all losses sustained by Austrian subjects in the matter of trade. This was to include trade in the Red Sea area, and to protect Austrians from bedouins, the Beys, and the government of Egypt.³ As if to confirm the rumours of growing Austrian predominance in Egypt the Imperial ambassador in Constantinople requested that a consulate be set up in Cairo, despite the withdrawal of the French consulate to Alexandria.⁴

¹FO 78/3, Extract of letter from Alexandria to Ainslie (probably from Lee, pro-consul at Smyrna), June 15, 1782 (cypher).

²FO 78/3, Lee to Ainslie, Oct. 17, 1782. Fir'awn also made a commercial agreement with Trieste. FO 78/2, Brandi to Ainslie (Italian), June 20, 1781.

³FO 78/3, Extract of letter from Alexandria to Ainslie (cypher), June 15, 1782.

⁴FO 78/3, Ainslie to Hillsborough, April 12, 1782. The French consulate had moved from Cairo in 1777 because of the pressures it was subject to by the ruling beys.

English suspicions of the intentions of the Holy Roman Empire were raised by Richard Lee, the Consul at Smyrna, who visited Egypt in the summer of 1782. He was convinced that Rosetti, a "finished Machiavellian trader" who wanted to "rule the roost" free of any responsibility, had formed the plan to renew the trade in a legal manner.¹ Lee was sure that an agency for the Red Sea trade was being formed in Trieste, and that Bolts of Bombay,² as well as the Emperor himself, were connected with the scheme. When he informed Ainslie of the matter, Lee seemed to think that Rosetti could be bribed to stop the trade altogether. But Rosetti was anxious to keep the prospects of the renewed trade a secret; he denied any knowledge of plans to re-open the route to an unidentified Englishman who went to Egypt for the purpose.³

By the end of the summer, Ainslie began to feel alarm. He seemed convinced of the truth of Lee's reports, but did not lose the opportunity to suspect Baldwin's complicity in the entire plan.⁴ He was sure that his old enemy was quietly plotting for a

¹FO 78/4, Lee to Ainslie (extract), Dec. 31, 1782.

²See above, p.97.

³FO 78/4, Lee to Ainslie (extract), Dec. 31, 1782. See Chapter I for Baldwin's earlier suspicions of Rosetti.

⁴FO 78/3, Ainslie to Grantham (cypher), Aug. 26, 1782.

revival of the trade, and wrote to Robert Murray Keith, British Ambassador in Vienna, asking him to investigate any connections Baron d'Herbert Rathkeal (Imperial Ambassador at the Porte) might have had with Baldwin.¹ When, in the early part of 1784, the Austrians were clamouring for unlimited rights of navigation in all seas of the Ottoman Empire, Ainslie's fears grew immeasurably. He was frightened, most of all, that a renewal of the Red Sea trade would once again hinder the profits of the Levant Company, and also those of the East India Company.²

But there were other plans afoot to open the port of Suez to European ships from India. While the Holy Roman Empire had tried to win the services of Antun Fir'awn for just these purposes, the French were able to successfully win the Customs official to their side. In January 1784, Brandi reported to Ainslie the sudden departure of Fir'awn from Egypt.³ He had left on the pretext of going on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but it was doubtful that he planned to return, especially since he had taken his immense fortune, estimated at between eight and ten million francs, with him.⁴ In May of the same year, the itinerary of his journey was reported: Malta,

¹FO 78/4, Ainslie to Keith, April 12, 1782.

²FO 78/5, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), Feb. 10, 1784.

³FO 78/6, Brandi to Ainslie (Italian), Jan. 5, 1784.

⁴Corr. Pol., Turquie, 174, Consular Report, Feb. 1786. A good part of his fortune apparently came from his share of the booty of the "Nathalia" in 1779. Corr. Pol., Turquie, 172, Choiseul-Gonffier to de Castries, Feb. 26, 1785.

Leghorn, Venice, and Trieste. Once established abroad, Fir'awn contacted French merchants interested in the Red Sea trade, and offered his services to them. He had, in 1775, promised the French dragoman in Egypt, Venture de Paradis,¹ that he would aid French ships that brought India goods to Suez. In 1778, Paradis went to Marseilles and spoke of Fir'awn's offer to merchants there, who showed great interest in the possibilities of a Red Sea trade. It was with these men that the former Customs official wished to co-operate.²

The Russians were also trying to establish themselves in Egypt but did not seem to have any special interest in the Suez trade. In July 1785, a Russian consulate was set up in Alexandria with Baron Thonus as the consul who then proceeded to announce the imminent arrival of an English consul and a Danish consul.³ Thonus and the Austrians were helping Murād and Ibrāhīm to rebel against the Porte, and hoped to thereby render the internal affairs of Egypt independent of the Porte.⁴

The Ottomans also made use of the Red Sea trade route during this period. In 1784, eleven Turkish ships arrived at Suez from

¹Paradis was to accompany Bonaparte to Egypt in 1798. Clément, Les Français d'Égypte, p.141.

²Corr. Pol., Turquie, 173, Comte A. Faraun to Guys (copy), Oct. 28, 1785. For further information about this association, see Chapter IV, below.

³FO 78/6, Brandi to Ainslie (Italian), Aug. 22, 1785.

⁴Ibid., Aug. 24, 1785.

Jedda, with coffee, drugs, and other goods. There were rumours of thirteen more to come.¹ In November 1785, Brandi announced that a merchant ship in Bengal was destined, with much merchandise, for Egypt. He could not ascertain, however, which colours it would be flying.²

The use of an alternative route

Ainslie was determined to ignore the possibilities of the Red Sea dispatch route in order to discourage its use for trade purposes. Owing to the necessity of an alternative route from England to India, he turned to the idea of a passage via Aleppo and Basra. It was this method that he insisted on using during the period of Baldwin's absence from Egypt. He tried to convince the authorities in London of the practicability of the route, but succeeded only in receiving orders in 1786 to press claims for British rights of navigation in the Red Sea.

In September 1779, the Ambassador reported that two officers of the East India House had left London for Bombay on 10 July. They arrived in Aleppo on 22 August, and went directly from there to Basra and Bombay.³ Ainslie seemed to find the speed of the

¹FO 78/5, Brandi to Ainslie (Italian), May 12, 1784.

²FO 78/7, Brandi to Ainslie (Italian), Nov. 28, 1785.

³SP 97/55, Ainslie to Weymouth, Sept. 17, 1779.

passage extraordinary, for he commented repeatedly on it:

London to Vienna would take seven days; Vienna to Constantinople twenty-two or three days; Constantinople to Aleppo seven days.¹

When he heard of the Anglo-Dutch rupture at the beginning of 1781, he sent the news to India by the new route.² It evidently pleased the Court of Directors, for they rewarded him with a present of £500.³

Ainslie was also anxious to promote the Basra route for trade purposes in order to divert interest from the Suez. He appealed to the Porte in the late summer of 1779 to facilitate the transport of goods from Basra to Aleppo and back. Sulaymān, the Pasha at Basra, was the Ambassador's friend, and of great help to English messengers and traders. Ainslie suspected that the French were trying to overthrow him in order to start their own contraband trade with British settlements in India. A plan for this was made up by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's cousin who returned to Baghdad in early 1781.⁴ His aim was to form a relationship with the Pasha, the Ottoman Coast Commanders, and the Arab tribes of the area. Ainslie was suspicious that those Britons who had been thwarted in the

¹FO 78/2, Ainslie to Hillsborough, Feb. 1, 1781.

²FO 261/4, Ainslie to Mitchell, Feb. 1, 1781.

³FO 26/4, Mitchell to Ainslie, May 14, 1781.

⁴FO 78/3, Ainslie to Hillsborough, April 10, 1782.

Evidence in French archives shows that both the Red Sea route and the Aleppo-Basra route to India were of interest to the French. Corr. Pol., Turquie, 166, March 30, 1780, de Vergennes to de Sartine.

pre-1779 Red Sea trade were somehow connected with the French designs in Basra. He even went so far as to ask Hillsborough¹ for a secret service budget in order to verify some of his ideas, since he suspected the Venetians were also involved.²

But it was not only the French and Venetians who wanted to use the Aleppo-Basra route for trade. Ainslie was aware of the fact that many rich Greek and Armenian merchants were using it as a means to reach India. He mentioned a particular case of the wealthy Serpos family who had houses of trade in Venice and Constantinople. They were sending a younger member of the family to "seduce" the Pashas of Baghdad and Basra, in order to settle in India as his family's agent. Ainslie felt compelled to give the young Serpos a letter of introduction to his consul in Basra, but privately warned the latter of the dangers involved.³

There were no real public conveyance methods from Constantinople to Aleppo and Basra. Couriers would have to be hired, although Tatars were kept in Constantinople for the purpose, and the British Embassy had its own in constant pay and attendance. The Tatars were

¹Wills Hill, 1st Marquis of Downshire, Earl of Hillsborough (1718-1793). In 1741 he entered Parliament. In 1763, he was the President of the Board of Trade. In 1768, after serving as Postmaster General, he became Secretary of State for the Colonies. In November 1779, he succeeded Weymouth as Secretary of State for the Northern Department. He resigned the post in March 1782.

²FO 78/3, Ainslie to Hillsborough, April 10, 1782.

³Home Misc., 161, Ainslie to Latouche, April 7, 1782.

not honest, and often disobeyed orders, causing considerable delay in the arrival of messages. Intermediate agents would have to be employed in Constantinople and Aleppo, but once again, this was extremely inconvenient.

A suggestion was presented by Humphrey, a British factor at Constantinople, to Ainslie, who in turn conveyed it to the East India Company in London; it was written in the form of a memorial, and was concerned with the steps to be taken in order to ensure a better and more efficient route to India.¹ It was based on the theory that hired Tatars were not to be trusted; but that four should be kept in constant pay, two at Constantinople, and two at Aleppo. The memorial was written, presumably, to attain the office of agent for the Company.

British Activity in Egypt

Although official Britain virtually ignored Egypt during the period from 1779 to 1786, especially after an act of Parliament in 1781 prohibited the Suez trade,² there were a number of individuals who showed interest in the country. They included travel-

¹ Egypt 5a, Humphrey to Ainslie, Nov. 8, 1784.

² "And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that, from and after the fifth day of July, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-two, it shall not be lawful for any British subject ... to carry on or be concerned in any trade or traffic whatsoever, in sending any kind of goods and merchandizes, the produce or manufacture of the East

lers, merchants, writers, East India Company servants, army officers and statesmen. Many of these visited the country, and some later published their experiences; they had a definite viewpoint as to the rôle of their country in establishing a direct route to India.

Mark Wood, a captain of engineers of the East India Company, left London on 23 March 1779, and arrived in Alexandria on 16 May. He was received by a Venetian merchant who, according to Wood, always entertained British travellers.¹ Mention was made of Baldwin having an agent in Alexandria, and a French agent at Rosetta. The Englishmen in Egypt at the time, just previous to the "Nathalia" disaster, were Captain Waugh of the "Britannia", and Captain Robinson of the "Morningstar", both of whose ships were anchored at Suez. Andrew Skiddy was also present. When Wood arrived at Suez in order to depart for Bengal, the "Nathalia" was just arriving.

Wood landed in India on 2 July. He wrote to the Secret Committee of his journey, and of his adventures at Mukhā where the

Indies or China, by the way of Suez, or by any other channel to Europe; and in case any British subject ... shall carry on ... such trade..., he ... shall forfeit and pay to the United Company double the value of the goods and merchandizes which shall be so sent to Europe, to be recovered in any court of justice in the East Indies, or in His Majesty's Court of King's Bench at Westminster." 21 George III, C.65, cl.xxx. The Act was passed on 18 July 1781.

¹This was obviously Rosetti, since other travellers (see below) mentioned him.

Frenchman St. Lubin¹ was the instigator of an Anglo-French outbreak. The Pasha at Mukhā was anxious to maintain the neutrality of his port, and detained the French until the "Morningstar" was safely out of the Straits of Bab-al-Mandab.

Wood obviously believed that the Red Sea route should be encouraged for the Company's use, for in his letter he mentioned that two small packet boats (70 to 90 tons each) needed to be established in the Mediterranean Sea for the use of dispatches; he suggested Malta or Messina as excellent ports for these boats, Nice and Marseilles being unreliable in times of war with France.²

Some time very late in 1779, the "Nancy", an English ship, arrived at Alexandria.³ It was commanded by Captain John Wilson, and it loaded senna, myrrh, and linseed to be sent to Britain for the two firms of John Bond, and Cazalet and Cook.

Towards the end of February 1780, two ships sailed from India. One of the vessels was a ship of war belonging to the East India Company, the other was H.M.S. "Coventry". The latter carried urgent dispatches for the King and his Ministers in London from the Nawab of Arcot, Admiral Hughes⁴

¹See above, p.97.

²Egypt 5a, Wood to Sir William James and Secret Committee, Sept. 15, 1779. Also Mark Wood, Remarks during a journey from England to India through Egypt in 1779.

³SP 105/170, Entered Jan. 10, 1780 in Impositions Book of the Levant Company.

⁴Sir Edward Hughes (1720?-1794), Admiral. In 1773, he was named Commander-in-Chief in the East Indies. In 1777, he returned to England, but was re-appointed to the same position in July 1778.

and Sir Eyre Coote.¹ To protect the carrier of the dispatches, the Nawab of Arcot, Admiral Hughes and Governor Rumbold of Madras² had letters for the Sharīf of Mecca, the Pasha of Egypt, and Ibrāhīm Bey asking for a safe passage.³

The ships arrived on 24 May at Quṣayr. Five men, including James Wooley, landed. They were well received, and given guards and camels to help them cross the desert by Ḥusayn Bey who governed Qina. Ḥusayn had already received "presents" for this service, so he even arranged for an escort. Then, all of a sudden, the men were made to pay 2,500 Spanish dollars, after which they were arrested and sent to Cairo as prisoners.

When they reached Cairo, they were taken to Ibrāhīm Bey who received them politely. He read the letters of introduction, was satisfied with the contents, and gave orders for the release of the men. Four of them then proceeded to Jedda and India; James Wooley remained in Cairo since his destination was to be London.

¹Sir Eyre Coote (1726-1783), General. In 1769, he was Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Presidency. In 1770, he returned to England on the overland route through Egypt. In 1777 he was named Commander-in-Chief in India.

²Sir Thomas Rumbold (1736-1791). He served under Clive during the siege of Calcutta, and at Plassey was Clive's aide-de-camp. In June 1777, he succeeded Pigot as Governor of Madras. He gave the orders for the attack on Pondicherry which fell on 19 March 1779, after which the crown gave him a baronetcy.

³FO 78/1, Edward Hughes to Sharif of Mecca, n.d.
FO 78/1, Thomas Rumbold to Shaykh al Balda, n.d.

The next morning he went to Ismā'īl Pasha in the Citadel to show him the letters of introduction. The Pasha's reaction came as a shock to Wooley: he abused the Englishman, shouted insults at him, detained him, and finally imprisoned him.¹ After a few days, during which Rosetti pleaded for the Englishman, the Pasha decided to send his prisoner to Constantinople for trial; to ensure his arrival there, an Ottoman guard was sent to accompany him.²

When Ainslie heard that Wooley was a prisoner in Constantinople, he immediately sent a protest through his secretary to the Grand Vezir, the Reis Efendi being ill at the time. The reply at first was ignorance of the entire matter, then that the question would have to rest pending the Reis Efendi's return. Ainslie continued to press the authorities, until he was allowed to visit Wooley at the Customs House where he was detained. After much trouble, Ainslie was able to secure the release of his countryman by taking him into his own custody according to the Capitulations.³

But the officials at the Porte were exceedingly angry when they learned of Wooley's departure from the Customs House. They appeared at the British Embassy with orders from the Grand Vezir to return the

¹ According to Ainslie, it was the French Ambassador who put pressure on the Ottomans to detain Wooley. Egypt 5, Ainslie to the East India Company, Oct. 17, 1780.

² FO 78/2, Wooley to Ainslie, Aug. 26, 1780. Also, ibid., Aug. 28, 1780.

³ It was not entirely done without payment. It cost the Ambassador £154. Egypt 5, Extracts of letters from Ainslie respecting expenses at the Porte, 1777-80.

Englishman with them. He had disobeyed the edict of 1779 and would have to be punished. A great uproar followed, during which Ainslie remained adamant, and refused to have Wooley evicted from the Embassy.

Ainslie was greatly irritated. While he remained convinced that Wooley was essentially innocent¹ and had suffered needlessly at the hands of the Ottomans, he was most suspicious that the Englishman had been purposely used by the authorities in India to try to reopen the Red Sea trade. His most decisive proof was the letter sent by Governor Rumbold to Ibrāhīm Bey which urged that the past friendship of the two countries should continue;² Ainslie was convinced that the passage of Wooley on the "Coventry" was merely a façade for the real purpose of Rumbold and Admiral Hughes: to re-establish contact with the Beys of Egypt with a view to further economic ties.³

Wooley was finally able to leave Constantinople on 1 September for Belgrade, Vienna, and then London.⁴ He reported his experiences to the Court of Directors, and was most emphatic in his statements that Britain had to ensure a free and safe passage for the route to India via the Red Sea.

¹He referred to the unfortunate man as "my old acquaintance". Add. Mss. 35519 f.202, Ainslie to Keith, Sept. 2, 1780.

²See Appendix V for complete text of the letter.

³FO 78/1, Ainslie to Weymouth, Sept. 16, 1780.

⁴FO 78/1, Ainslie to Hillsborough, Oct. 2, 1780.

On 9 March 1780, an Englishman arrived in Egypt from Leghorn on his way to India. He was First Lieutenant (Navy) Samuel Nickills, but was in the service of the Holy Roman Empire. He had a recommendation for Rosetti who took charge of him while in the country.¹

James Capper was a Colonel in the service of the East India Company. He travelled to Egypt in 1778, but published the details of his journey in 1783.² They were written in the form of letters from Fort St. George in 1780, at the request of a "person of rank" in India who wanted to return to England via Suez. He described the procedure of arriving at Suez: an Egyptian boat approached the incoming vessel, and asked what the passengers wanted; an officer then came on board with a present of bread and oranges from the government; the officer then took the letters that would be forwarded the same day to Cairo; and, with the messenger who took the letters, a note would be sent informing the shaykh al-balad of the ship's arrival. Capper made it quite clear that "... nothing less than the existence of our settlements in India may some time or other depend upon our possessing a right of passing unmolested through Egypt....."³

¹FO 78/1, Brandi to Ainslie (Italian), March 11, 1780.

²James Capper, Observations on the Passage to India through Egypt and across the Great Desert.

³Ibid., p.xii.

On 24 April 1782, Henry Rooke arrived at Suez from Jedda. Six days later, he arrived in Cairo where he was to stay for a few days before his departure for Alexandria, and then England.¹ He was most amazed at the fact that the East India Company did not make more use of the Red Sea route for dispatches. He suggested that the Company should offer presents to Ibrāhīm Bey, the shaykh al-balad. Rooke claimed that the trip from London to Madras lasted only sixty-three days. He did not seem particularly enthusiastic about a renewal of the trade from India to Egypt, however.

One day while Rooke was out riding in Cairo, he met a party of Ottoman soldiers who said that Mustafā Bey wished to see him. He was taken to Mustafā's headquarters along with two European friends who wished to accompany him. When they arrived, the two others were separated from Rooke who was taken in alone to see the Mamlūk. The latter informed him that an Englishman who had passed through Egypt two years previously owed £500 to an Armenian merchant. Rooke was told he had to pay the debt. When he refused, he was imprisoned, but was well treated. He was only released later with the aid of a certain "Mr. R.",² presumably Rosetti, for descriptions of his influence with the local authorities and his claim to have been of great help to travelling Englishmen, seem to indicate

¹ Henry Rooke, Travels to the Coast of Arabia Felix, and from thence by the Red Sea and Egypt to Europe.

² Ibid. p. 99.

this.

While Rooke was in prison, he was visited by some of the Bey's officers. He recalled later: "I found several of them pleasant liberal-minded men, and we conversed together very sociably through my Arabian servant..."¹ In the evening, the Bey asked to see him. He was in a very good frame of mind and temper, but seemed very anxious to have the money. He asked Rooke, smilingly, to convert to Islam; Rooke said he "... hinted that I should be very well off if I could become one of them and stay at Cairo...."² During the interview, two of Ibrāhīm's officers entered and, because of Rosetti's influence, demanded Rooke's immediate release.³ Mustafā had to obey the orders, albeit somewhat reluctantly, "... observing at the same time that whenever he had an opportunity of making a little money, Ibrahim Bey always interfered and prevented him".⁴ Before he left Mustafā's quarters, Rooke still had to pay some money; he paid £50 to "different people".⁵ He then saw Ibrāhīm Bey, who was exceedingly kind and courteous to him, and promised him all necessary protection.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 100.

³Another person who helped Rooke out of the situation was a rich Turkish merchant, Haj Kosim, who pleaded personally with Ibrāhīm for the release.

⁴Rooke, op.cit., p.100.

⁵Ibid., p.101.

Rooke's amazement at the lack of interest shown by the East India Company for the extraordinary swiftness of the Red Sea route was echoed by other Englishmen. In 1783, Robert Richie, the British consul in Venice, presented A sketch of a Plan for a more expeditious and regular Intercourse between London and India, and of employing for that purpose two packet boats in the service of the Honourable East India Company between Venice and Latakia, or Alexandria and Cyprus.¹ He also gave the Company another plan: A Sketch of a plan for two packet boats to be employed in the East India Company's service between Venice and Latakia or Alexandria.² Yet a third project was included in a letter to Carmarthen in 1784: Sketch of a plan for sending dispatches to India by the way of Bassora.³

Major John Scott⁴ of the Bengal division of the East India Company forces, later sent to England by Warren Hastings as his political agent, was eager to see a revival of the Suez trade. His reasons were put forward in consideration of the Bengal economy, as well as to uphold Hastings' theories thereon, especially during the latter's impeachment. In 1782, he published a pamphlet entitled A review of the transactions in Bengal during the last

¹ Egypt 5a, Richie to Mitchell, Feb. 5, 1783.

² Ibid.

³ Egypt 5a, Richie to Carmarthen, Oct. 1, 1784.

⁴ He later became Scott-Waring.

ten years¹ which presented, amongst many other items, the reasons behind the desire to reopen the trade. Bengal at the time was suffering from the exodus of the Bengali fortunes to England. There were two ways in which this was being done: first, the money was being sent out in large sums which was ruinous to the economy; and second, Englishmen were lending their money to foreigners, thus decreasing the sales of the East India Company in England. The second method could be made practicable, but only if the foreigners were required to bring bullion to Bengal in order to buy cargo; thus, the decrease in sales would be otherwise compensated. On the other hand, if the Bengalis were not able to lend their money to foreigners, they should bring bullion to Bengal, or give up trading altogether. The "languid circulation" in Bengal necessitated Hastings's opening of the Suez trade; its growth would have put a stop to the transfer of British capital to foreign countries, and to France most of all.

Edmund Burke, in the 9th Report to the Commons, verified Scott's theories.² He stated that £1 million a year were being sent out of Bengal. The investments made in goods by foreign com-

¹An extract is to be found in Egypt 5.

²Reports of the House of Commons, vol. 6, 1783, East India. "9th report of the Select Committee appointed to take into consideration the state of the administration of justice in the provinces of Bengal, Bahar and Orissa", Reported by Richard Smith, June 25, 1783.

panies from funds of British subjects were being sent to China. £2 million were paid into private hands for the charge of collection, as well as for civil and military establishments. The trade to the Red Sea was one of the best ways to carry money out of Bengal. It was a great pity that it had sadly diminished since 1779.¹

Lieutenant Richard Scott arrived in Alexandria on 18 June 1780 and wished to go to India. But at the time there were no available vessels to carry him there. Furthermore it was considered dangerous for him to go to Suez so soon after the "Nathalia" incident. He was advised to leave Alexandria as soon as possible. He went to Latakia on 24 June, and then from there to Aleppo where he arrived six days later. In Aleppo he met Baldwin who was still considering a journey to India. Scott observed in Baldwin an unusual concern for the papers which had been stolen from him when he had been attacked in Antioch. Scott strongly suspected that Baldwin had designs and plans to expose in India that were not compatible with the interests of the East India Company.² He was very wary of Baldwin, describing him as having

¹It is interesting to note that Baldwin was an "intimate acquaintance" of Burke; the latter had promised him to obtain damages for the "Nathalia" disaster. FO 78/1, Ainslie to Hillsborough, March 3, 1780.

²Egypt 5, Scott to L. Sullivan, July 6, 1780.

"ambiguous sentiments, and evasive arguments". He was also made to understand that Baldwin had connections with Mr. Bolts.¹ for a seven-year plan for the Red Sea trade. Scott was sure that this scheme would so harm the Company that it would almost surely be driven out of India.

Baldwin gave Scott an account of his plan, Baldwin's Reflections Concerning Suez to India.² In it, he began by attacking Ainslie for having created obstacles to destroy the Suez trade. He then gave suggestions for opening the communications for passengers and dispatches, and also for re-establishing the trade. In order to re-open the passage for communication, Baldwin put forward the idea that two ships should go up the Red Sea from India, but refuse to trade coffee until reparations for the "Nathalia" losses be paid. Since the Ottoman Empire needed coffee badly, it would be forced to acquiesce, after which a new treaty could be drawn up. As to the methods to re-establish the trade, Baldwin suggested that armed ships flying the Nawab's colours³ should seize Egyptian trade in the Red Sea. When the Porte would consequently protest, unlimited trade in Egypt would undoubtedly follow, since the coffee trade linked Egypt, Mecca and Constantinople. Baldwin

¹ Scott stated that Bolts was from Bengal; it is most likely he was mistaken. See above, pp.97 and 101.

² Egypt 5, 1780.

³ Presumably the Nawab of Arcot.

feebly ended his thoughts by putting in a reminder that Britain's great power would always emerge victorious in case of armed combat.

The Red Sea route was not entirely ignored by Englishmen, for Jean Baptiste Mure, the French consul in Alexandria, reported the arrival in Suez some time in the summer of 1783 of a messenger with urgent dispatches for London.¹ It is interesting to note that he was accompanied by Manonalki, the same Armenian linguist who had been abused during the caravan disaster of 1779.

Two more Englishmen were associated with Egypt during the period from 1779-1786. Sir Richard Worsley² visited Egypt in 1785.³ He was well known to be an avid collector of antiques, and it is presumed that his visit was instigated by archaeological rather than political reasons.⁴ But he did become involved in local problems when he arrived.⁵

On 7 August 1786, at the height of the crisis following the Ottoman punitive expedition to Egypt, an English merchant by the name of Mr. Clark arrived in Alexandria, having come from Marseilles.

¹AE, B_I, 113, Mure to de Castries, June 17, 1783.

²Sir Richard Worsley (1751-1805), antiquary and traveller. In 1779 he was made clerk of the Privy Council. From 1774 to 1802 he was a member of Parliament. He had also served as governor of the Isle of Wight.

³FO 78/6, Brandi to Ainslie, Aug. 22, 1785.

⁴He was accompanied by Willey Reveley, an artist, who made sketches for him. Add. Mss. 35535 f. 286, Ainslie to Keith, Dec. 3, 1785.

⁵See below, p. 134.

He wanted to go to India, and had with him a letter of recommendation to the French Consul from Baldwin who was, by now, the Consul-General, but had not yet arrived.¹ Mr. Clark wanted to take the Suez route, but was advised not to because of the troubled conditions. So he was obliged to travel via Aleppo and Basra.²

Growing British awareness of French designs and subsequent confrontations at the Porte

Individual Englishmen were beginning to see the value of an official interest in Egypt, but found little support for their ideas from their government, the two Companies, or the British ambassador in Constantinople. France, in the meantime, was actively engaged in seeking closer political and commercial ties with the Beys, the 1785 Truguet agreements being the culmination of earlier efforts. Ainslie was constantly being informed of the situation, albeit often from second-hand sources, but he somehow managed to remain adamant in his long-standing belief that Britain should have no interest in Egypt. And he naively continued to justify his conviction by turning to the Porte for its repeated denials of French concessions. The present account deals mostly with British reports on and reaction to the French presence in Egypt.

¹See Chapter III, below.

²FO 78/7, Brandi to Ainslie (Italian), Aug. 9, 1786.

Ainslie was highly aware of the rivalry that existed between England and France for influence within the Ottoman Empire; it was a rivalry that was greatly increased by the enmity that existed between the two countries. A manifestation of this persistent competition may be seen in two isolated examples, both cited by Ainslie.

The first concerned the diplomatic circles of Alexandria. On 4 June 1782, King George's birthday, the Ragusan Consul refused to fly his national flag in the customary tribute. The reason was that he wished to show his sympathy for France. Brandi, who somehow felt responsible for English affairs, was insulted, and complained to Ainslie who denounced it as "improper and insolent conduct".¹ He complained to the Rector and Councillor of the Ragusan Republic,² yet he realized that the French were ultimately responsible.³

Another incident was of greater importance to the British. In May 1784, Ainslie proudly reported to London that after a great deal of negotiation, he was able to persuade the Porte to exempt

¹FO78/3, Ainslie to Fox, July 10, 1782,

²FO 261/4, Ainslie to Rector and Councillor Ragusan Republic (Italian), July 10, 1782.

³The Ragusan Consul had apparently complained that Brandi was in no position to act for the British; Ainslie firmly replied to the Rector that although Brandi was not a Consul, he was recognized by the Ottoman Empire. Ibid.

the British from the mastariye duty.¹ In June of the same year, the French Ambassador, Choiseul-Gouffier, asked the Porte for permission to navigate a limited number of merchant ships in the Red Sea, accepting any restrictions the Empire might wish to impose.² The Ambassador claimed it as an indulgence following the recent British exemption from the mastariye duty. The proposal was treated with great mystery by the Porte, but Ainslie reported to London that one of his "friends" there had claimed it had definitely been rejected.

During the time preceding Truguet's visit to Egypt, Ainslie proved to be extremely slow in realizing the possibilities of an independent French agreement with the Beys. When Truguet visited Constantinople in 1784, the Ambassador merely reported his presence to London. When Truguet left, he noted that the boat slipped out of the harbour in November of the same year.³ Even Truguet's return was noted without any special concern. He arrived on 21 February 1785 from Alexandria; the interim had been spent in France, Alexandria and Suez.

¹FO 78/5, Ainslie to Carmarthen, May 25, 1784. France had obtained the exemption in 1739. The mastariye (or masderiye) tax was imposed on goods imported from a foreign country and sold in the Ottoman Empire. It was levied according to the weight or measure of the commodity. Gibb and Bowen, op.cit., vol. 1, part 2, p.13. Also, Wood, op.cit., pp. 213-214.

²FO 78/5, Ainslie to Carmarthen, May 25, 1784.

³Ibid., Nov. 25, 1784.

A short while later, Brandi informed Ainslie that Truguet had arrived on the "Tarleton", armed with a Hatti Sherif to the Pasha¹ for a free passage for India goods on the Red Sea.² Truguet had also asked for free entry to the new port of Alexandria which had hitherto been reserved for Ottoman and Egyptian ships. Murād Bey refused to allow it, but honoured the Frenchman with a present: a fur garment valued at 1,500 pataccas.³

Upon receipt of the above communication, Ainslie immediately dispatched Pisani, his dragoman, to the official secretary of the Grand Vezir, to enquire whether the Porte had indeed granted free navigation of the Red Sea to France. Pisani stressed the fact that since Britain had put a stop to the route for the sake of the Ottoman Empire, despite the great loss of efficiency for dispatches, the Ambassador hoped that, if and when the rule were revoked, he would be the first to be notified. The Grand Vezir sent Ainslie the "strongest assurances" that he was "totally ignorant" of any concession made to France.⁴ He furthermore stated that the Porte was uninformed of French manoeuvres in Egypt, and would definitely look into them, after which he would inform Ainslie.

¹The Pasha, Muḥammad Silāḥdār, had been ordered by Murād to descend from the Citadel on 15 Dhūl Ḥijja 1198/31 October 1784; Murād Bey then declared himself qā'im maqām. Jabartī, op.cit., vol. 2, p.83.

²FO 78/6, Letter from Alexandria to Ainslie (extract)(French), Jan.29, 1785. It is assumed the writer was Brandi.

³The patacca was a Westernized version of abū-ṭāqa, the colloquial expression for the window-like image on the face of the coin, a thaler. Ṭāqa was Egyptian for window. Description de l'Égypte, vol. 16, p.289.

⁴FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), March 10, 1785.

The Ambassador was greatly concerned that if the news from Egypt were correct, France would have the exclusive right to bring India goods to the Ottoman Empire. He realized there was very little he could do, and did not know exactly what. He therefore wrote to Carmarthen,¹ saying: "In this situation of affairs I humbly request to be honored with Your Lordship's instructions how to act. It certainly would be difficult, but I do not think impossible to engage the Porte to retract her concession... the influence of France seems daily to increase at the Porte."²

A few days later, Ainslie received a "very civil" message from the Grand Vezir with "positive assurances" that the Porte would always prevent French vessels going up the Red Sea from Mukhā and Jedda. He saw no reason to believe the rumours about a possible treaty with Truguet. He only knew that the Frenchman had asked for permission to use the old port of Alexandria, but had been refused. Ainslie was quickly satisfied with this answer. "I have reason to think that this declaration is consistent with the truth..."³

His suspicions of the French were not totally discarded, however. He seemed convinced that they were seeking the protection of

¹Francis Osborne, 5th Duke of Leeds, Marquis of Carmarthen (1751-1799), Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1783 to 1791.

²FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), March 10, 1785.

³FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), March 18, 1785.

a Muslim prince for the Red Sea trade, but he could be sure of nothing because of the lack of precise information. He began to realize the necessity of a consul or "public agent" in Egypt, but needed the approval and financial aid of the East India Company for the post. The best argument he could put forward was that British influence at the Porte was negligible in the face of that of France; French engineers were employed in all departments of the Ottoman government, and were even wearing their French uniforms at work.¹

In the meantime, Carmarthen conferred with the Commissioner for the Affairs of India and promised to supply him with all available information on the trade and communication between India and Suez.² The Minister also instructed Ainslie to bear in mind the fact that Britain must at all times follow French activity in Egypt. Despite the flimsy evidence of the Truguet rumours, the Ambassador was told to act as if they were true. "You sir have heard of the wish to induce the Porte to allow her the two ports of Suez and Gedda on the Red Sea, these objects are of themselves sufficient to create alarm on our part..."³ Carmarthen also wished

¹Ibid.

²FO 78/6, B. Rouse to W. Fraser, April 23, 1785.

³FO 78/6, Carmarthen to Ainslie, May 19, 1785.

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to know what rôle, if any, Russia and the Holy Roman Empire had in the French plans.

The first signs of French use of the Red Sea after Truguet's visit seemed to pass unnoticed by Ainslie. On 10 June 1785, he reported to Carmarthen that he had received a letter from Egypt saying that a French packet boat from Bengal had arrived at Suez. It carried four passengers who had landed, and then went on to Cairo. But the Ambassador was not worried about French advances in Egypt, he was more concerned about the validity of the letter he had received which had not been dated.¹

Fifteen days later, he was able to confirm the rumours of the French ship. It had sailed from Pondicherry, and had most probably carried dispatches to France. It carried no merchandise, but there were rumours that it was soon to be followed by a merchant-ship with goods consigned to French trading-houses in Cairo.² Ainslie was also able to confirm the fact that the primary interest of the Truguet mission concerned the entry of French goods to Suez, and that the Porte and the Sharif of Mecca disapproved.

Choiseul-Gouffier, the French Ambassador, disclaimed any knowledge of his country's intention to re-open the trade. Ainslie drily concluded that "... should a ship arrive at Suez with India goods,

¹FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen, June 10, 1785.

²FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen, June 25, 1786.

it is by no means improbable she will be produced under the English, or any other flag, except that of France".¹ He did not believe his French counterpart, of course, but found it equally difficult to disbelieve that Englishmen were connected with French plans.

Ainslie reported to Carmarthen in June that he was aware that both France and Austria were anxious to render Egypt independent of the Porte.² Yet it is amazing that he never looked further into French designs. A fortnight later he confessed that he was "entirely in the dark" as to French intrigues in Cairo, and did not know whether there were any agents there from Pondicherry. "But I have the strongest assurances that the Porte will never approve the views of France or ever tolerate a plan of commerce to and from India."³ An incident occurred that proved to Ainslie the great interest of France and Austria in Egypt. An English captain by the name of Waldegrave had been staying with Ainslie, but planning to go to Egypt in order to report to Carmarthen on the state of affairs there. Both Choiseul-Gouffier and Herbert Rathkeal, the French and Imperial Ambassadors respectively, suddenly

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), July 9, 1785.

showed great interest in him, after having ignored him for six months. They pretended to be anxious about the captain's departure, and fearful lest he should be infected with the plague which was quickly spreading in Egypt. Captain Waldegrave finally had to postpone his departure.¹

The Porte was equally worried about German and Russian efforts to establish themselves in Egypt. Their respective agents were encouraging the Beys to rebellion, and urging them to aim for independence. Ainslie did not discard the possibility of such an uprising; he remembered the revolt of 'Alī Bey, and knew that the Beys would always seize the opportunity of disturbances within the Empire to rid themselves of the Ottoman aegis. It did not seem likely they would do anything at the moment, since they were financially dependent on the Porte, owing to the plague and famine in Egypt. But it was a well-known fact that Murād Bey had been suspected for many years of a plan for independence, for which he had been "courted" by the Holy Roman Empire, Venice and France. The French merchants of Egypt had lent him a great deal of money and, of all the foreigners, seemed to enjoy his confidence the most.

¹Ibid. Waldegrave actually never reached Egypt. He became ill in October, and on his way to Greece and the Morea developed a violent fever.

Realizing his inability to discover French motives in Egypt, Ainslie decided to engage Brandi as a private agent to help British subjects in Egypt, and to send out as much information as possible concerning events there.¹ Brandi was also the Consul for Sweden and the vice-Consul for Naples, and had lived in Egypt for twenty-five years. In the early summer of 1785, he travelled to Constantinople; while there, he received his appointment from Ainslie. He was to be paid £50 per year, with no other responsibility from Britain. Ainslie gave him £25 in advance before he left Constantinople on 5 July. It is indeed strange that it never occurred to Ainslie that an Englishman would be a far better and more reliable source of information; the Ambassador disliked Baldwin, but Hughes was probably still in Egypt.

It is even more strange that the Ambassador relied only on Brandi's letters for a detailed enquiry of French pursuits in Egypt. On 23 July, he had to admit that even the Porte had "... varied in her general opposition to establishing a trade to India through Egypt by opening navigation of the Red Sea to the flag of Christian powers".² The logic of his argument is rather vague, for he went on to say that although he knew that there was a French mission in

¹ Brandi had actually referred to himself as British agent as far back as 1780. Consul Mure said: "Brandi ... quise dit agent des anglois..." AE, B_I, 112, Mure to de Castries, July 24, 1780.

² FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), July 9, 1785.

Cairo, he could swear that the Porte had not been consulted, and actually knew nothing of it. Once again, Ainslie identified Britain with the Ottoman Empire; if the Porte were unaware of French plans, there was no reason for Britain to be different.

Ainslie knew that the present plan of France in Egypt had originally been devised by Saint-Priest, the former Ambassador to Constantinople. But he only saw it as a means to ruin the East India Company. He also knew that the plan was to begin by trying to allow all Christian powers to navigate the Red Sea, so as not to irk the Porte against France. Then the latter country would negotiate with the Beys to secure a firm position for its trade. Ainslie warned the Porte of these plans, and proudly reported to London the strong assurances of opposition.¹ The Reis Efendi even added that he had strongly reproached Ibrāhīm Bey for allowing the French packet boat from India to berth at Suez.²

Further support for Ainslie came from the Grand Admiral of the Ottoman Empire:³ "... I received the strongest assurances of the Grand Admiral's personal friendship for me, and of the most particular respect and regard of the Porte for His Majesty's Crown. He

¹FO 78/6. Ainslie to Carmarthen. (cypher), Oct. 10, 1785.

²See above, p. 127.

³Ghāzī Hasan, the Kapudan Pasha, who was to lead the punitive expedition to Egypt in 1786.

confirms my former intelligence relating to the trade of Egypt and the navigation in the Red Sea ... but was remarkably reserved on the politicks of the Porte..."¹

But Carmarthen did not feel reassured by Ottoman statements. He told Ainslie that it was absolutely essential that information should be relayed on the passage of French military men by the overland route to India.²

When Brandi arrived in Alexandria on 15 August, he immediately set about trying to find out what Truguet and the Beys had been up to. He then heard of the agreements, and sent copies of them to Ainslie.³ The Ambassador's immediate reaction was not one of concern. He relayed the content of the agreements to Carmarthen, adding that even under the present conditions, a British Consul in Egypt was unnecessary. He thought that it would be better to have the dispatch route put under the protection of another country that would be willing to deal with the Beys, something Ainslie obviously did not think of for Britain. He was sensitive, however, to the precedent the Truguet agreements would cause, and he foresaw the possibility of other nations wishing to follow suit.⁴

¹FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen, (cypher), Aug. 9, 1785.

²FO 78/6, Carmarthen to Ainslie (cypher), Aug. 16, 1785.

³FO 78/6, Brandi to Ainslie (Italian), Aug. 22, 1785.

⁴FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Oct. 10, 1785.

It was not until November that Ainslie sought an interview with the Porte regarding the agreements. His interview with the Reis Efendi was then reported in detail to Carmarthen. The Porte emphatically denied previous knowledge of the agreements. Ainslie began by telling the Reis Efendi that he had personally contradicted all rumours of the agreements until he had actually seen a copy. The Ottoman official interrupted with "extraordinary agitation" and asked what was meant by that statement. So Ainslie produced a Turkish copy of the agreements. "Nothing could exceed the surprise..." of the Reis Efendi except, perhaps, the indignation he showed at the mention therein of having the Hatti Sherif of 1779 revoked.¹ He begged the Ambassador not to mention the interview which would only then be communicated to the Divan.² He then went on to assure Ainslie that "...no overture whatever had been made to this Court by the French Ambassador, who constantly denied having any previous intimation respecting the mission of the packet boat to Suez, and had even promised that this practice should be discontinued in future."³

The Reis Efendi also asked Ainslie for news of Truguet, saying he knew nothing about him except that he was now somewhere in the

¹FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Nov. 10, 1785.

²Ainslie interpreted this as: "At all events the Reis Efendi's demand to keep the French business secret is an indication that he intends to steal a march upon them." Ibid.

³Ibid.

Archipelago. He concluded the interview by assuring the Ambassador that the Porte had no intention of revoking the Hatti Sherif of 1779, and would never change its views on the navigation of the Red Sea.

The Divan met on 18 November to discuss the Truguet agreements. The Grand Vezir and the Kapudan Pasha were in attendance. Before the meeting took place, three couriers had been sent to Cairo to give the Porte's command which was reaffirmed at the Divan: the Red Sea trade was to be discouraged by all possible methods. Two days later, the Reis Efendi once again assured Ainslie of the sincerity and determination of the Porte.¹

The Ambassador trusted the Ottomans completely. "... I am perfectly convinced that the new ordinance of the Porte will render their [the French] situation insupportable at Cairo, and that they will limit their principal speculations to the trade of Alexandria which is sufficiently important."² He was further reassured by a report from Worsley³ who had applied himself energetically to find out more from the French.⁴ He had lived in their quarters, and reported that the resident French merchants

¹FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Nov. 25, 1785.

²Ibid.

³See above, p. 120.

⁴FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Nov. 25, 1785.

saw little hope of any commercial advantages to be derived from the agreements. He also witnessed insults and impositions that were being hurled on the French community which had no means of defence or retaliation.¹

At the end of November, Brandi reported that as yet the terms of the agreements had not been put into effect.² He was sure that a letter had arrived for Ibrāhīm from Choiseul-Gouffier asking for the agreements to be ratified. Ibrāhīm apparently answered that he was planning to have the agreements put into effect despite the disapproval of Constantinople, and that his personal guarantees would protect Frank merchandise from the reprisals of the bedouins.

The Truguet Agreements

While Ainslie in Constantinople was busily trying to ascertain the Porte's non-involvement in a French agreement with the Beys, the French themselves had dispatched Chevalier de Truguet to Cairo where he successfully concluded three agreements that ensured his country's right to bring merchant ships to Suez. French awareness of the political importance of Egypt was by no means a new thing; memorials and treatises on the subject had been written since the

¹Baldwin was unconvinced of this argument, although he obviously respected Worsley. Egypt 5, Comments by Baldwin, Oct.1785-Jan. 1786.

²FO 78/7, Brandi to Ainslie (extract)(Italian), Nov. 28, 1785.

days of Louis XIV. But the renewed interest in the commercial navigation of the Red Sea had been directly brought about by the example of the lucrative trade the British had carried on after the March 1775 Treaty. With the departure from Egypt of Baldwin in 1779, followed by that of Fir'awn in 1783, the possibilities of British and Austrian plans to command the Red Sea trade were laid aside. It remained for France to take advantage of this in order to assert itself.

In July 1783, de Castries¹ sent the Comte de Bonneval to Egypt to enquire into the possibilities of the trade route from Suez to India.² The Minister also instructed Bonneval to meet with Mure, the French merchants of Cairo and the Customs official. But despite the fact that for undisclosed reasons Bonneval was unable to go on the journey, Mure wrote to Castries. The next year Choiseul-Gouffier sent Truguet from Constantinople on exactly the same mission.

Truguet arrived in Alexandria in December 1784. From there he went to Cairo where he started out by studying how the British had conducted the Red Sea trade.³ Then, with the help of Charles

¹Marquis Charles-Eugène-Gabriel de Castries (1727-1801), a brilliant soldier who was successively Commander-in-Chief of the Gendarmerie, Governor-General of Flanders, and, in 1780, Ministre de la Marine. In 1783, he was named Maréchal de la France.

²Corr. Pol., Turquie, 169, Copie d'un article des instructions de M. le Comte de Bonneval, July 9, 1783.

³Corr. Pol., Turquie, 172, Truguet to Choiseul-Gouffier, Feb. 24, 1785.

Magallon¹ and his wife² he was able to conclude three different agreements: with Murād Bey, with Yūsif Kassāb, the Customs Master who had replaced Fir‘awn, and with Shaykh Nāsir Shadīd, a bedouin chieftain.

The agreement with Murād Bey was signed on 27 Şafar 1199/10 January 1785, and had the signatures of two other men besides the Mamlūk and Truguet: that of ‘Uthmān the Kāhya of the Mustahfīzan,³ and that of Sulaymān, former Kāhya of the Mustahfīzan.⁴ Ibrāhīm was not in Cairo at the time, but Murād promised Truguet that he would add the signature of the Shaykh al-Balad as soon as he returned. The agreement required the ratification of the Porte by a Hatti Sherif, but it was declared that if the edict were late in arriving from Constantinople, the terms would still be valid. The eighteen clauses were as follows:

¹Charles Magallon (1741-1820), a French merchant who settled in Egypt c. 1775 after having travelled extensively in the Levant. He was named Consul-General for France in Egypt in 1793. He left Egypt in 1797, but returned with Bonaparte the next year. He was later imprisoned by the British, but was able to go to France in 1800. For further information, see Chapters III to V, below.

²Baldwin later reported that Mme. Magallon received a diamond-encrusted picture of Louis XVI in return for her services. Egypt 5a, Baldwin to E.I.C., Jan. 19, 1787.

³Lieutenant, or executive officer of the Mustahfīzan, the garrison Janissaries.

⁴Corr. Pol., Turquie, 172, "Conventions préliminaires d'un traité de commerce et de navigation de l'inde par Suez, arrêtées et conclues au Caire le 10 janvier, 1785." Testa, op.cit., vol. 2, pp. 75-80, also has the text, but certain errors may be found: the date is quoted as being 9 January; and, the signatories are confusedly said to be nine instead of four.

- I All vessels of French merchants might land at all Egyptian ports, and would pay the same taxes as Turkish vessels. No one might inspect the cargo, or force it to be landed. If the French ships needed help, the authorities at Suez would give it, charging the minimum price.
- II If French vessels were damaged in Egyptian ports, the Bey of Cairo would protect and help them.
- III Warships that simply accompany merchants vessels were not to pay anchorage duties. The captains and others of the warships might land safely. These ships might also replenish water supplies at Suez. Also, French ships and their captains would have preference over those of other nations.
- IV If the merchant vessels were unable to reach Suez, they might land at Tor, and would be protected on the road to Cairo.
- V In case of trouble between Egyptians and Frenchmen, the former would be dealt with by their government, the latter by their ship's captain, or the consul.
- VI French merchants going to or from India might cross Egypt without any harm, and would not be taxed.
- VII The French Consul in Egypt would be received with all the honours due to his rank, exceeding any for his colleagues.
- VIII When French vessels arrived at Suez, the French vice-consul established in the city would go on board, and then would notify the Consul of the list of goods. No one else would

be allowed on board without the Captain's permission. The loading and unloading of French boats would be done without any foreign intervention.

- IX Only the Pasha and the ruling Bey of Cairo might count the bales that are carried on the vessels, and put seals on them. When the merchandise arrived in Cairo the seals would be broken in the presence of a French delegate and a delegate of the Pasha. The price of the customs duty would then be fixed.
- X The customs duties on all goods from India would be: 4^o/o to be paid to the Pasha; 2^o/o to the shaykh al-balad.
On cloth, the duty was to be paid in kind; on drugs, spices and other articles, in cash. Once they had paid the duties, the French merchants were entirely free of charges.
- XI If the French merchants were dishonest about the quantity of spices and drugs, the Egyptian authorities would have the right to keep the goods, and pay for 90^o/o of the total value claimed.
- XII If coffee was to be used as a present, or even to be used for private consumption, the ordinary tax would have to be paid.
- XIII If the goods were intended for use in France, and ordinarily would go around the Cape, only 3^o/o tax was to be paid (2^o/o to the Pasha, 1^o/o to the shaykh al-balad).
- XIV Presents to officials were not obligatory.

- XV When French merchant ships arrived at Suez, the government of Cairo would protect the passengers on their journey to Cairo, and would be answerable for any theft or pillage which might be made by the Arabs.
- XVI If ever the rulers of Cairo decided not to allow India merchants in Cairo, they must give the latter one year's notice to leave, and guarantee they would not lose their homes or money.
- XVII If another European country asked for conditions similar to those of France for the India trade, France would always retain the best advantages especially when it came to the paying of duties.
- XVIII The signatories swore to uphold the terms of the agreement.

The agreement between Truguet and Yūsif Kassāb, which was to be kept secret, was signed on 12 Rabī' 1199/23 January 1785, and also had the signatures of 'Uthmān and Sulaymān.¹ The nine clauses were as follows:

- I Kassāb promised to aid all French merchants arriving at Suez.
- II Kassāb would always place French interests above all others.

¹ Corr. Pol., Turquie, 172, "Traité particulier entre Truguet et Mu'allim Joseph Kassab", Jan. 23, 1785. The text is also available in Testa, op.cit., vol. 2, pp. 80-82.

- III Kassāb would always mediate between French merchants and Egyptian officials; he would try to alleviate unjust extortions from the latter.
- IV If Kassāb realised the guilt of a French merchant, he would only notify the French Consul who would then deal with him justly.
- V Kassāb would obtain $1\frac{1}{2}^0$ /o on all French goods; if cloth, in kind, if drugs and spices, in cash.
- VI Kassāb would obtain 3^0 /o on all India goods destined for sale in the Ottoman Empire. This would be kept secret from the Beys and the Pasha.
- VII Kassāb would obtain $1\frac{1}{2}^0$ /o on goods shipped via Alexandria or Rosetta to France.
- VIII Goods arriving from France for India would pay 3^0 /o either in Alexandria or Cairo; they would not be charged more at Suez.
- IX If Kassāb left his post, he promised to make sure that his successor would fulfil the terms of the agreement.

The third agreement was signed on 16 Rabī' I 1199/27 January 1785 in the presence of Kassāb.¹ It stated that when French ships arrived at Suez, Shadīd would see to it that the goods would be con-

¹ Corr. Pol., Turquie, 172, "Traduction du traité fait avec un sheik arabe pour le transport des marchandises de Suez au Caire", Jan. 27, 1785. The text is not to be found in Testa, op.cit. See Appendix VI for the complete text.

veniently and safely escorted to Cairo. The duties paid were to be fixed by Shadīd. It was signed by Shadīd and Truguet, and three witnesses: Ismā'īl, Mustāfa Ahmad, and Ḥasan.

Chapter III

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONSULATE:

BALDWIN'S APPOINTMENT

Reaction to the Truguet Agreements

When the contents of the Truguet agreements became known in London, alarm seized the members of the newly-created Board of Control for Indian affairs.¹ The Commissioners for the affairs of India prepared a report on Egypt based on a history of Anglo-Egyptian relations. This included Murray's papers, as well as those of Ainslie, Weymouth and Carmarthen. No trace could be found of Murray's call for an agent in Egypt, or of the 1774 ferman from the Porte regarding Red Sea traffic.² The 1775 agreement was also not to be found, and Carmarthen's office declared that the last British treaty with the Ottoman Empire had been in 1675.

Baldwin immediately became the only person who could successfully explain the affairs of Egypt to the India Board. Henry Dundas summoned him to a meeting of the Board. He was asked to

¹ An act of Parliament in 1784 created a governmental department in the form of a Board of Control for India. Its main functions were the political, financial, and military administration of the territorial possessions of the East India Company. The Board was also responsible for the appointment of a Governor-General who was to be the representative of the Crown.

² FO 78/6, Fraser to Rouse, April 23, 1785.

give his opinion on the news of the Truguet agreements, and the probable intentions of the French in Egypt. After lengthy discussions, Dundas asked him to write a memorial on Egypt, "... as to its geographic relations; as to its intrinsic and extrinsic resources; as to its means of defence; as to its importance to France; as to its danger to England..."¹ Consequently, Baldwin wrote Speculations and Resources of Egypt, a pamphlet which he later published in two editions in 1801 and 1802 under the title of Political Recollections.² It was on the basis of this work that the decision to have a British Consul-General in Egypt was made.

When the news leaked out that Baldwin was to be officially reinstated in Egypt, the members of the board of the Levant Company were alarmed. The deputy-governor and two members were sent to Carmarthen to remind him of the Company's right by charter of its own choice and selections of consuls in the Ottoman Empire. Carmarthen declined to either deny or confirm the rumour of the appointment. The Company then turned to the Attorney-General and asked him to verify its chartered rights, pointing out its anxiety to "... prevent the mischiefs which may arise from the appointment

¹Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.25.

²For a complete list of all Baldwin's publications, see Appendix X.

of a Consul in Egypt..."¹

One of Baldwin's sympathisers was Governor Genge Johnstone.² He was completely convinced of the importance of the Red Sea route, claiming that at least £25,000 a year could be saved if it were used for dispatches. He thought very highly of Baldwin, and said he was "the fittest man" he knew to be in Egypt, although he was not unaware of the enmity that existed with Ainslie. All the same, he stressed that Baldwin's advantages far outweighed his disadvantages. Johnstone suggested to Dundas that he should receive £350 per year from the government, and £500 from the East India Company. There should also be an extra payment of £400 for the cost of transmitting letters between Alexandria and Suez, especially since Baldwin would not be allowed to maintain any private trading.³

It was Brandi who first sent rumours of Baldwin's new position to Ainslie.⁴ He assured the Ambassador, however, that it was not possible for Baldwin to return to Egypt. Ainslie was greatly disturbed at the possibility. He had already appointed Brandi as

¹FO 78/7, Levant Company to Ainslie (extract), Nov. 29, 1785.

²George Johnstone(1730-1787) who had served as Governor of West Florida in 1763. In 1783, he became one of the Directors of the East India Company.

³Egypt 5, Johnston to Dundas (copy), Sept. 4, 1785.

⁴FO 78/6, Brandi to Ainslie (Italian) (extract), Aug. 24, 1785.

his agent, and he did not relish another period of friction with his old enemy. He carefully told Carmarthen that "... in my uncertainty of Mr. Baldwin's motions, I could not consistently with your Lordship's commands retract my said agency, and drop a correspondence which may be useful until others arrive..."¹ He also reminded the Minister that when he had taken up his position in Constantinople, he was bound by a penalty of £10,000 to appoint only those Consuls that the Levant Company should recommend for the benefit of its trade.²

Ainslie was relieved that the charter of the Company was being studied by the Attorney-General. He was sure, despite the rumours of an official appointment, that Baldwin would never venture back to Egypt; the state of turmoil that existed there, and the fact that the Porte remained adamantly opposed to Red Sea traffic, were sure proof of a thwarted mission.³ Anthony Hayes in Smyrna seemed to share Ainslie's feelings: "Mr. Baldwin has but a very discouraging prospect, in regard to his establishment, and the more so, considering his former situation, and he has a greater share of ambition and vanity, than prudence, in venturing again to Egypt."⁴

¹FO 78/6, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Jan. 25, 1786.

²FO 78/7, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Jan. 25, 1786.

³FO 78/7, Ainslie to Levant Company (extract), Jan. 25, 1786.

⁴FO 78/7, Hayes to Ainslie (extract), March 17, 1786.

But Dundas was determined to see a British establishment in Egypt, most of all to ensure an open communication to India at all seasons of the year. After examining the French and Russian Capitulations, and realizing that both states legally had access to the Red Sea, he decided that a treaty with Egypt should be negotiated to put Britain on an equal footing with them.¹

Dundas was aware of the personal relationships that existed between Baldwin and Ainslie, and the harm that could be done by it. So he obtained from the former a promise to be in a state of "... forgetfulness of all past animosities between Sir R.A. and himself..."² Ainslie, at the same time, was reminded that the Levant Company's interests should never be considered before those of the nation.

The Levant Company, however, continued to express its disapproval of the appointment. It desperately tried to prevent Baldwin's departure, and even asked Ainslie "... whether you are of opinion that any injury will be likely to arise; we are persuaded we need not point out to Your Excellency the expediency of taking such measures as you may judge most proper, in order to obviate any difficulties..."³ Ainslie hastily assured the Company that

¹ Egypt 5, Dundas, Walsingham, Grenville, Mulgrave to Carmarthen, May 19, 1786. Also in FO 24/1.

² Ibid.

³ FO 78/7, Levant Company to Ainslie, Aug. 1, 1786.

... he had no reason to suppose the India trade would be reopened; even if it were, the Porte would firmly oppose it, and at any rate, the Ambassador would be there to protect all British factors.¹ But the Company was not convinced; it continued to find excuses to hinder Baldwin's departure until the last minute of his stay in England.²

Ainslie did not receive official word of the appointment until the late summer of 1786. He hoped until then that Baldwin was going to Egypt merely as an agent for the East India Company, and therefore as a private citizen. Consequently, "... neither his transaction ... or his engagements can commit anybody but himself ..."³ He cautioned Carmarthen, however, that if Baldwin were to receive the title of Consul, the Ambassador, "... contrary to his engagements with the Turkey Company...",⁴ would have to obtain his patent from the Porte, and then be responsible for his actions.

When the official appointment finally reached Ainslie, his shocked surprise was quickly put aside, and he bravely promised obedience. "I shall at all times exert my utmost efforts, and in-

¹FO 78/7, Ainslie to Levant Company, Sept. 9, 1786.

²Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Oct. 12, 1786.

³FO 78/7, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Sept. 25, 1786.

⁴FO 78/7, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Sept. 25, 1786.

fluence at the Porte to facilitate compleat success of that gentleman's mission."¹ He even went so far as to agree that the Levant Company's interests would be made subordinate to the superior ones of the British nation. He immediately notified the Reis Efendi of Baldwin's impending arrival, and promised to apply for a Consular Patent as soon as the Consul reached Egypt. He also volunteered a letter of introduction to Ghāzī Ḥasan Pasha, one of his personal friends, who was, at the time, at the head of the Ottoman forces in Egypt.

But he did not hesitate to add, later, that the friendly foreign missions in Constantinople regarded the new appointment as "dangerous" and "inimical" to the Porte's interests,² especially since he had found out in the chancery of the Porte that the berat of the last British Consul in Egypt had been removed by orders of the Reis Efendi. It was only after Ainslie sent his congratulations on Ghazi Ḥasan's achievements in Egypt, and said that the time had come for Britain to re-establish connections with that province now that it was once again under Ottoman control, that Baldwin's commission was granted.

The British government was most anxious that the Baldwin-Ainslie feud should be put aside in consideration of more important

¹FO 78/7, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Oct. 10, 1786.

²FO 78/7, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), Oct. 25, 1786.

duties to be attended to, and Ainslie was aware of this. "I flatter myself Your Lordship will credit my solemn declaration, that my disapprobation of Mr. Baldwin's measures when they appeared improper, had nothing to do with the man, at that time nearly a stranger to me, and only known by the civility and favours shewn him."¹ Dundas approved of Ainslie's attitude, and realized that the Ambassador had done his duty towards Baldwin "bonafide and honourably".² He must have known Baldwin well, for he suggested to Carmarthen that he should be made to understand Ainslie's willingness to forget the past, and at the same time learn to avoid all the mannerisms of behaviour that he knew would irritate his superior in Constantinople.

When Baldwin was told of his new position, he notified the East India Company, and offered to be its agent for the correspondence between India and England.³ The offer was considered four days later at a Committee of Correspondence on 23 May 1786. The decision was taken to re-establish communications via Suez.⁴ Baldwin was called in, and told that he should consider himself a Company

¹Ibid.

²FO 78/7, Dundas to Carmarthen's office, Dec. 19, 1786.

³Egypt 5, Baldwin to E. India House, May 19, 1786.

⁴Egypt 5, At a Committee of Correspondence, May 23, 1786.

agent; he was told also to prepare a memorandum on the most expedient method of forwarding dispatches through Egypt.

This Baldwin did in a detailed report concerning the financial aspect of his services.¹ He asked for a fixed salary of £1,000 with an added payment of £200 for the rent of his house. The remainder of the cost, which totalled £2,230, included payments to be made:

a)	to his deputy at Alexandria	£100
b)	" " " " Suez	£150
c)	for 2 dispatches from Alexandria to Cairo	£ 80
d)	to hire an Arab writer and interpreter	£200
e)	for presents to the Pasha and Beys	£500

He also suggested, if the Company were to agree, that extra agents at Gaza, Tor and Qusayr could be added, at the extra expense of £880.

But once again, the Company was not willing to accept Baldwin's charges. On 1 June 1786, he was officially appointed agent with a fixed salary of £500 plus £100 for his house rent. The other payments made would be:

¹ Egypt 5, Baldwin to the E. India Company, May 25, 1786.

- a) to his deputy at Alexandria £100
- b) to his deputy at Suez £150
- c) for each Suez to Alexandria, and
Alexandria to Suez dispatch £ 40
- d) for an Arab writer and interpreter £110
- e) for presents to the Pasha and Beys £300

The Committee added an initial payment of £1,000 for presents to the Beys for free passage of dispatches. But the agreement with Baldwin was founded on the stipulation that he would obtain a free passage through Egypt from the responsible authorities within one year. Under no circumstances whatsoever was he to participate in trade.¹

The Company agreed to Baldwin's earlier suggestions of having regular vessels set out from India for the purpose of carrying dispatches. It was decided that an armed cruiser would set out once a year from Bengal on 30 November to Fort St. George, then to Bombay, and finally to Suez. It would remain at Suez until Baldwin sent it back with Company correspondence newly arrived from England. A similar arrangement would not be necessary in the Mediterranean, since vessels there were numerous and readily available.²

¹ Egypt 5, At a Committee of Correspondence, June 1, 1786.

² Egypt 5a, Secret Court of Directors, June 27, 1786.

The Aim of Baldwin's mission

"The great end of Mr. Baldwin's residence at Cairo is the opening a communication to India through Egypt."¹

It is quite clear that in the few months that had elapsed after London became aware of the Truguet agreements there had been much careful research in the history of Anglo-Egyptian relations, probably for the first time. The affairs of Egypt were and had been so remote that even Dundas had an unprecise date for the 1775 agreement between Hastings and Muhammad Bey Abu'l Dhahab.² The greatest impetus for the sudden interest in Egypt was, without a doubt, the fear that the French, with their recently concluded agreements, would gain an important step over the English in India. To Baldwin was therefore provided the opportunity to obtain, single-handedly, equal rights for Britain.

The Consul was supplied with a long list of instructions for his mission in Egypt. In these, the Hatti Sherif of 1779 was examined in the light of the English capitulations of 1675, and it was regarded, therefore, if somewhat belatedly, as being entirely inconsistent with British rights. The fact that Ainslie had allowed it to be put into effect was weakness on his part, for he had written to Weymouth in 1779, and had shown him the fourth article added to

¹ Egypt 5a, Dundas, Wallingham, Grenville, Mulgrave to Carmarthen, May 19, 1786.

² It was referred to as having been concluded in 1773 with 'Alī Bey. Ibid.

the French capitulations of 1673, in which French vessels were to be allowed to bring goods to Suez. The English capitulations had put that nation on exactly the same footing with the French, and therefore there should, by right, be no hindrance to their ships sailing the Red Sea.

Despite the fact that Dundas urged both Baldwin and Ainslie to press for British rights of trade, his primary interest was in an efficient route to India. He emphatically acknowledged Baldwin's rôle in the saving of British establishments on the coast of Coromandel in 1778, and recognized the unlimited possibilities of a representative in Egypt.

Concerning the route itself, it was decided, presumably upon Baldwin's recommendation,¹ that dispatches should be sent from Venice to Alexandria in 20 days; from Alexandria to Suez (via Cairo) in 6 days; and from Suez to the nearest port in India in 25 days. A duplicate would be sent from Alexandria via Gaza to Tor or Jedda, since the greatest losses usually occurred between Alexandria and Suez.²

In order to reduce the cost of the route, Carmarthen instructed Carteret, the Postmaster-General, to arrange with the East India Company for an expedient way to send dispatches. It was decided

¹This does not appear in Baldwin's "Preliminary to Instructions", however, Egypt 5.

²FO 24/1, Route by Suez to the East Indies, n.d.

that an annual public correspondence should be established. A packet would be sent out in June from London, and in November from India. Private letters would cost 6 shillings each.¹

Baldwin's Instructions

The instructions were given to Baldwin before sailing for Egypt, and a copy was sent to Ainslie. The orders were closely defined, and were intended to be the Consul's guide in the assertion and maintenance of British prestige in Egypt:²

- 1) He was to report regularly to London on any events that would be of interest, and most especially about those that would relate to the trade or passage of the Red Sea.
- 2) He was to remain constantly aware of French activity, and report on it.
- 3) He was immediately to set about trying to negotiate a trade treaty with the Beys for the East India Company:
 - a) he was to remind the Beys of the 1775 agreement, in which Britain risked offending the Porte in order to bring its lucrative trade to Egypt.
 - b) he was to stress that, by that very agreement, Egypt could not deny Britain the rights she ac-

¹FO 24/1, Carteret to Carmarthen, June 6, 1787.

²FO 24/1, Carmarthen to Baldwin, June 20, 1786.

quired before any other state

- c) he was to state his willingness to enter into a Treaty with the Beys, on condition they granted him the same privileges they did to Truguet
 - d) while negotiating the treaty he was to ensure the discontinuation of double-duties (i.e. to have tezkeres validated)
 - e) he was at all times to demand the same concessions as those given to France.¹
- 4) When the agreement was concluded, he was to send it to Ainslie for the signature and ratification of the Porte.
 - 5) He was to draw up to £2,000 as initial payment for necessary presents, and after that a sum of £500 per year. He was at all times to submit an account for money spent, remembering to exercise the utmost moderation.
 - 6) He was to send an account of the number of French ships that were trading from India to Egypt; also, the number of ships trading under French colours; also, those trading under Muslim colours.
 - 7) He was to report any stipulation made for trading ships belonging to Asiatic Powers in alliance with France; this was to include the tonnage and build of the vessels, a detailed

¹The draft of the instructions said that if Baldwin were unable to obtain the commercial treaty, he should immediately negotiate permission for the dispatches. FO 24/1, Heads of Instructions from the India Board, May 19, 1786.

description of their cargo, and the selling price of the merchandise. He was also to keep a close watch on remittances made by the French ships from East India Company members. He was to remit the names of French packet boats, the dates of their arrival, and a complete list of officers on board.

- 8) He was to protect the Englishmen that passed through Egypt and Palestine whether they were government officials or members of the India Company.
- 9) He was to prevent any obstruction of Red Sea navigation by the Sharif of Mecca.
- 10) He was to make a note of the instructions given to British consuls in Europe concerning Mediterranean Passes.
- 11) He was to appoint native agents at Quşayr, Jedda, Tor, and Gaza, with salaries of £100 per year each. The rate of exchange was to be made on the basis of the Turkish dollar of the day.
- 12) He was not to receive presents or gratuities from merchants trading in, or passing through, Egypt.
- 13) He was not to trade unless the East India Company gave him permission to do so.
- 14) He was to maintain and support the rights of the Levant Company always.

- 15) He was to maintain a constant correspondence with the British Ambassador in Constantinople.

It is obvious from the list of instructions how anxious London was about the success of Baldwin's mission. It is important here to note, however, that no mention of his appointment was made either in the French consular reports from Egypt or the French ambassadorial accounts in Constantinople. While the British interest in Egypt after 1785 seemed to grow directly out of a feeling of competition with France, the latter, on the other hand, seemed to be totally oblivious of the British presence, and tended to concentrate on the internal developments of the country, especially during the Ottoman expedition of 1786.

Ainslie's Instructions

When a copy of Baldwin's instructions was sent to Ainslie, a further list of orders was included for the ambassador concerning the consulate in Egypt.¹ It stressed that Ainslie was to remove any impediments that stood in the way of Baldwin's two principal missions: the conclusion of a treaty of commerce; and, the securing of permission of passage for the India Company dispatches. If a treaty were entirely impossible to obtain, he was immediately

¹FO 78/7, Carmarthen to Ainslie (cypher), Sept. 1, 1786.

to press for claims of the rights of passage. In case the treaty should be acceptable, it was essential that tezkere should be validated for Egypt; the best argument would be the Capitulations, the 31st article in particular, where the port of Alexandria was cited as one of the places where the double-duty could not be levied.

The Ambassador was to lose no time in notifying the Porte of Baldwin's appointment. After that, he was to keep up a regular correspondence with the Consul. In order not to offend Ainslie, Carmarthen said that Baldwin had been assigned mainly because Cairo was so remote from Constantinople, and not because of "... the smallest inattention to your rank and character..."¹ He also delicately pointed out to the Ambassador his rôle in the issue of the edict of 1779. But he was extremely firm when it came to the clash of interests between the Levant Company and the Crown: "... Your Excy. is to consider this instruction by the King's command, with this express reservation, that it is only to be in force when neither the orders, nor the interests of the Turkey Company shall be repugnant in any manner whatsoever to the superior interests of the nation at large...."² Carmarthen

¹FO 78/7, Carmarthen to Ainslie (cypher), Sept. 1, 1786.

²Ibid.

meaningfully asked for a copy of the French capitulations of 1673, a section of which Ainslie had quoted in the letter to Weymouth in 1779 to prove that the French had acquired the right to navigate the Red Sea.

A second, accompanying letter, also in cypher, was sent to Ainslie. It was devoted largely to the delicate matter of the former troubles between the Ambassador and the newly-appointed Consul-General, and how they should be overlooked.¹

Ainslie had previously asked repeatedly for extra money for his Embassy to be spent on secret service facilities which the French apparently had a great deal of. Carmarthen, with the importance of Baldwin's mission uppermost in mind, now allowed him to draw up to £2,000. It was to be concentrated on efforts to have the edict of 1779 revoked, and also on helping bring about the proposed treaty with the Beys. He was also allowed a further £600 for presents.

It must have been greatly humiliating for the Ambassador to be finally accorded the money he had previously unsuccessfully asked for, especially when it was to be for the accomplishment of the mission of his old enemy. Yet he immediately showed his readiness to comply with all the orders. On 9 October, he notified

¹FO 78/7, Carmarthen to Ainslie (cypher), Sept. 1, 1786.

the Porte of Baldwin's appointment. Because time was short, he decided to do away with an official application from Baldwin, and instead apply immediately for the berat and imperial command that were essential to the Consul's recognition.¹ A fortnight later he obtained both documents, and sent them to Brandi² in Alexandria to await Baldwin's arrival. He also enclosed two letters for Baldwin: the first from the Grand Vezir to 'Ābidi Pasha of Cairo, recommending the Consul and all British merchants and travellers; the second, an introduction to his great friend Ghāzī Hasan Pasha. The Ambassador also applied for a recommendation to 'Ābidi Pasha from his Kapū Kahya.³ at the Porte.⁴

Arrival of Baldwin in Egypt

Carrying the King's appointment, Baldwin left Falmouth on 15 August 1786, and arrived in Naples on 29 September.⁵ He was

¹The documents cost 915 piastres. FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, April 25, 1787.

²Brandi's services were now discontinued. Ainslie mentioned that he had not been particularly pleased with him, but seemed to feel pity for the Italian due to numerous family problems, including the fact that his wife and daughter had died in the plague.

³Official agent.

⁴This letter was finally not enclosed with the others. FO 78/7, Ainslie to Baldwin, October 23, 1786.

⁵Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Oct. 12, 1786.

accompanied by his wife, and possibly even a daughter.¹ From Naples, they sailed to Smyrna, presumably for family reasons since Mrs. Baldwin's father was a merchant of the city. Baldwin wrote to Ainslie from Smyrna, and informed him of his great willingness to co-operate on all points in his instructions. He asked the Ambassador to press claims at the Porte to allow British ships to enter the old port of Alexandria. He could not resist adding: "The present opportunity would be a fair one, if Your Excellency would take it up with heart - I beg pardon - if Your Excellency should think it wise - for in that case the heart is pre-engaged, and I am sure will succeed."²

He left his family in Smyrna, deciding to send for them only when he had suitable lodgings in Cairo available,³ and sailed alone for Alexandria where he arrived on 18 December.

Before leaving England, he had asked Carmarthen for a sloop of war to accompany his ship to Alexandria, claiming that his French counterpart had enjoyed the same honour. He was careful to add that he had "... no personal vanity to gratify in this humble intimation...", but merely wanted to ensure equal respect for England to that accorded

¹He referred to "the ladies". Evidence of at least one daughter in Baldwin, Mr. Baldwin's Legacy to His Daughter, or the Divinity of Truth.

²FO 78/7, Baldwin to Ainslie (cypher), Nov. 29, 1786.

³They arrived on June 13, 1787.

to France.¹ His request was refused.

The Government of Alexandria and all the foreign consuls there paid him the customary compliments and public honours due to the rank of a consul-general. He then exhibited his berat and letters of recognition at the mahkama² where the principal officers of the government were gathered. The letters were acknowledged and authenticated by the qādī who then sent them to Cairo for ratification by the Pasha. After that, Baldwin was able to put up the flag of his nation and exhibit the Royal Arms and pictures.

He then proceeded to form the staff of his consulate. He had originally intended his Vice-Consul to be Thomas Turner, an Englishman who sailed with him from Falmouth.³ But Turner became very ill in Smyrna, and could not continue the journey; eventually, he returned home.⁴ So Baldwin appointed a staff made up of local residents: in Alexandria, James Wilberforce,⁵ a German, and Adamo do Mareo, an Armenian, the latter to serve as Arabic scribe and

¹Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Carmarthen, August 14, 1786.

²Islamic law court.

³FO 78/7, Baldwin to Ainslie, Nov. 29, 1786.

⁴FO 78/7, Baldwin to Ainslie, Jan. 13, 1787.

⁵He was later dismissed because he went into private business. Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Morton, Feb. 23, 1789.

interpreter; in Suez, Hajji Derwish from Cairo was to be his agent.¹ Later, he re-appointed Giovanni Felice Buccianti, who had been his scribe during his previous stay, as the agent for his chancery in Alexandria.² He decided not to appoint agents at ^Tor, Gaza, and Quşayr. When he first arrived, the uncertainty of political events prevented any serious consideration of the matter; later, he found it unnecessary to have agents there.³

One of the most incomprehensible aspects of Baldwin's official residence was his alliance with Carlo Rosetti. The latter, with the Customs Master Fir'awn, had laid the trap for the 1779 caravan disaster, and Baldwin had not hesitated to denounce him at home and abroad.⁴ During the seven years of Baldwin's absence, Rosetti had alienated himself from the French community, and had tried to work for an alliance with the Russians in Egypt. When the Russo-Turkish war prevented any development of that friendship, he turned to Baldwin and the British.⁵ It must have been very difficult for the Englishman to put aside his hatred for the Venetian, and accept his help to combat the animosity

¹ Egypt 5a, Baldwin to E.I.C., Jan. 19, 1787. Hajji Derwish died later that year and was replaced by Chelebi Yanni. Ibid., Dec. 22, 1787.

² FO 78/7, Buccianti to Ainslie (Italian)(copy), April 18, 1787.

³ FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, July 2, 1787.

⁴ Baldwin then said of him: "... he first infuses the spirit of devastation, and conceals his diabolical influence under the veil of pretended friendship." Baldwin, Narrative, p.4.

⁵ Corr. Cons., le Caire, 25, Magallon, Nov. 17, 1787.

of the relatively large French community.¹ He no doubt realized Rosetti's extensive knowledge of the country that had changed so much since his previous stay, and wished to benefit from it.

When Baldwin left Egypt in 1779, Ibrāhīm Bey had been the shaykh al-balad and Murād Bey the co-ruler. Ismā'īl Pasha had been re-instated after a brief interval during which he had been replaced by the Wālī of Jedda, Ibrāhīm Pasha, who had died in office. Murād and Ibrāhīm retained their hold over the country in the years that followed, except for the period 1783-1784 during which they quarrelled and a state of warfare existed between the two. They finally decided to resolve their differences in April 1784. In a meeting of the Divan on 10 Rabī' II 1199/21 February 1785, Ibrāhīm, the older of the two, was once again proclaimed Shaykh al-Balad, and Murād Amīr al-Hājj.² An uneasy truce continued to exist between the Beys until the expedition of Ghāzī Ḥasan Pasha in 1786 when they were forced to strengthen their position against him.

But the years 1783 and 1784 had been bad ones for Egypt for other reasons as well. During both years, the Nile did not reach the required level during the flood seasons. Very poor harvests ensued, causing prices, and that of wheat most especially, to rise enormously. With regular extortions imposed by Murād on the merchants

¹In 1786, there were 61 Frenchmen in Egypt: 36 in Cairo, 15 in Alexandria, 10 in Rosetta. AE, B_I, 113, Mure, n.d.

²Jabartī, op.cit., vol. 2, p.92.

poverty and famine struck the country. The inevitable outbreak of plague followed, causing many deaths, great panic and misery.

The foreign community was not spared any of the suffering during this period. It was mercilessly taxed by the beys, and was powerless to resist or refuse to pay. The French community was no exception. Despite the enormous benefits obtained for it by Truguet, its condition seemed to deteriorate rather than improve. It must have seemed ironical to Baldwin when he realized the ineffectual qualities of the very treaties he had been sent to emulate. While discussions were being waged in London concerning the commercial and political advantages recently obtained by the French in Egypt, the foreign community in Alexandria was undergoing an experience that proved how far it was from the protective realm of signed treaties.

Murād Bey and the foreign community in Alexandria: February 1786

When Murād Bey left Cairo in late January 1786 to collect his annual contribution, he sent his kāshif¹, Šālīḥ Agha, on 10 February to the foreign consuls that lived in Alexandria.² He demanded a fine of 5,000 pataccas (12,000 piastres) for the two buildings of the Hospice de la Terre-Sainte³ that had recently been

¹ Murād referred to him as his "son" in his letter to the Franks. A kāshif was immediately subordinate to a bey.

² The consuls were: Mure (France); Baron Thonus (Russia); Count Baliovich (pro-Consul, Venice); Valing (Holland); Agostini (Imperial); Brandi (Sweden); Giovanni Lapi (pro-Consul, Ragusa). The Dutch and Russian consuls were newly arrived in Egypt.

³ The hospice was usually made up of a monastery and a church.

repaired without permission. The buildings themselves would also have to be demolished unless the Consuls were willing to buy them back for 100,000 piastres.¹

The consuls immediately held a council to decide how to answer him. The church of the Terre-Sainte was the parish church of the Europeans in Alexandria, and it was run by Franciscans. But they decided to refuse to pay any money, and claimed their capitulatory rights.

Since the orders could not be revoked, the next day, at 11 a.m., the walls of the church were torn down. The Frank inhabitants and the monks were frightened, and sought refuge in the ships anchored in the harbour. Only the consuls remained in the city, and gathered at the home of Mure, the French consul. Mure and Baron Thonus,² the Russian consul, went to the scene of destruction. They met there with the kāshif, the qādī, and the serdar,³ and after conversation with the latter, were convinced that the whole manoeuvre was only a pretext for extortion; they were therefore most reluctant to give in, afraid of establishing a precedent. They tried

¹FO 78/7, Consuls to their Ambassadors in Constantinople (French) (copy), Feb. 12, 1786.

²The French residents in Egypt later claimed that it was Thonus, with the help of Rosetti and the Customs Master, who brought about the entire crisis. AE, B_I, 113, Magallon to Mure (copy), July 12, 1786.

³Military governor.

to bargain for a smaller sum of money, but the effort was futile. In desperation, they petitioned Ibrāhīm Bey and the Pasha, Muḥammad Yakan, for help. But the latter was virtually a prisoner in the Citadel, and the Bey's reaction was long in coming. They then resolved to appeal to the Porte, and wrote a collective letter to their respective ambassadors in Constantinople,¹ claiming all the while that although the hospice had been repaired in 1783, both Murād and Ibrāhīm had given their permission for the work to be done.² They gave the letter to a Venetian captain whose ship was due to leave Alexandria on 12 February, but the kāshif gave orders that no vessel was to be allowed to leave that day. The next day, the ship was permitted to depart, but not before a thorough search was made to ensure that no resident was on board.

In the meantime the consuls did not forget to ask Mme. Charles Magallon in Cairo to use her personal influence with Murād's family to help them. Mme. Magallon had lived in Egypt for a long time. Her first husband, Bernandi, a Venetian merchant, had supplied the mamlūk houses with French finery. When he died, his widow married Charles Magallon who continued his predecessor's business, and his wife was easily admitted to the ḥarīms of the ruling beys where she exhibited the latest silks and laces from France. She was a special

¹ See above, p.19, n.4.

² AE, B_I, 113, Mure to de Castries, March 25, 1786.

friend of Sitti Nefissi, Murād's favourite wife. The consuls wrote to Mme. Magallon, but the letter was intercepted by Sālih Agha.

The kāshif then told Mure that he was going to burn the two buildings. He told the Frenchman to take note of the valuables there, and to remove them. The Consul refused, knowing he would be arrested in the process of evacuating the religious site of its possessions, and that the effects would be confiscated. The kāshif consequently proceeded to denude the place of its precious items then he suddenly decided to stop, and wrote to Murād asking what he should do.

On 14 February Murād wrote a letter addressed to "Franks, Consuls, Greek and Coptic Nations".¹ In it he said that when Sālih Agha asked him what to do, he told him to leave things as they were. But the Consuls would have to pay 5,000 pataccas for his "hatketarik".² If the sum were not versed in full, he swore by God to destroy all their houses.

On 15 February, the Consuls met once again to decide on a plan of action. They finally reached the conclusion that the kāshif

¹FO 78/7. The date there is 16 Rabi' I. Assuming that there was a mistake in the translation, and that the date was actually 16 Rabi' II, the date then would be 16 February 1786. But the accounts given by the consuls say the date was definitely 14 February. Therefore the date must have been 14 Rabi' II.

²Haqq al-Tariq (road tax) which was imposed on village inhabitants by the messengers and other officials that were sent to the villages by the members of the government. Shaw, Ottoman Egypt in the Age of the French Revolution, p.145.

would have to be told that the capitulations protected them against having to pay the amount. But the dragoman was too afraid to deliver the answer. The Consuls tried to deliver the message through the Customs Master, but he coldly refused, although the Franks had always considered him their friend. Thonus finally managed to send the message with a Turk.

That same day, Ibrāhīm wrote to Murād,¹ complaining of the harsh treatment. He warned Murād of the strong connection between the foreigners and the Porte, and voiced his fear of the consequences of the incident. But Murād ignored the warning, and on 3 March an expedition to Alexandria demanded and obtained the money.

When Mme. Magallon finally heard of the affair, she went to Murād's wife, and told her about it. Sitti Nefissi wrote a pleading letter to her husband who promised to discontinue the entire matter. But his orders were late arriving in Alexandria; so, once again Mure appealed for help. When Mme. Magallon told Murād's wife, the latter reproached her husband and demanded an end to the episode. Murād Bey then sent for the Frenchwoman and politely apologized, saying she had been misinformed about the reparations of the hospice. He even told M. Magallon to issue orders for the closing of the affair in his name, and promised to replace anything missing. He wrote to Ibrāhīm² and a short while later a Divan was held in Alex-

¹FO 78/7, Substance of a letter written in Arabic by Ibraim Bey... to Murad Bey, February 15, 1786.

²On 12 Jumādā I 1200/13 March 1786. Copy available in AE, B_I, 113.

andria, the orders read, and everything returned to normal.¹

But the consuls had already sent a second collective letter to their ambassadors,² asking for formal protests that their capitulatory rights should be enforced. They especially asked not to have a ferman sent; it would only serve to antagonize the Beys. A military expedition was the only solution. On 6 March the ambassadors made an official appeal at the Porte.³ On 15 March, the Reis Efendi told the French Ambassador that the Porte highly disapproved of Murād Bey's actions, and would in due course find a way to manifest its anger.

The Ottoman Expedition of 1786

The landing of Ottoman forces, according to the representatives of the Europeans, ostensibly came as a direct consequence of the persecution of their community in Alexandria. But to the Muslims, the expedition was represented as due to the failure of the ruling

¹The account of Jabartī does not agree with that of the Consuls. He said that the fine had been levied against all the inhabitants of Alexandria, with the threat that the church would be destroyed if the money were not paid. Furthermore, it was only Baron Thonus who did not seek protection on the ships; he agreed to pay the money, but only if the Pasha ordered it in a ferman. So Ṣalīḥ was obliged to give up the venture, and instead asked for the Haqq al-Tariq. Jabartī, op.cit., vol. 2, p.103.

²FO 78/7, European Consuls in Alex. to their Ambassadors in Constantinople (French), Feb. 21, 1786.

³The Swedish Minister refused to sign the appeal, since it was concerned with a Catholic Church. Ainslie was not even asked to sign. FO 78/7, Ainslie to Carmarthen, March 8, 1786.

Beys to pay the taxes that were due to Constantinople and the Holy Pilgrimage, as well as to the bad management of the Pilgrimage.

The Porte had, in fact, seized the opportunity as an excuse to re-establish order in Egypt. When Baldwin arrived in Alexandria in December 1786, Ghāzī Hasan Pasha of the Ottoman forces had already made his triumphant way to Cairo. He had landed in Alexandria on 7 July 1786. After successfully subduing the city and its customs-house, he assumed control of the customs-houses of Damietta and Rosetta. In the meantime, Murād headed an expedition intended to confront the Ottomans at Fuwwa; it was defeated by the Ottomans at Raḥmāniyya, and news of the defeat reached Cairo on 2 August. Ibrāhīm had, meanwhile, remained in Cairo, but he fled and joined Murād at al-Āthar on 6 August.¹ The Beys gathered their forces together, and on 26 October, a bloody battle took place near Manshiyya which ended in a victory for the Mamlūks. Encouraged, they reached Giza on 23 November, and threatened Cairo. On 4 December, another battle took place in which Murād and Ibrāhīm were defeated, after which they retreated south towards Upper Egypt.²

The situation thus when Baldwin arrived was still uncertain. Murād and Ibrāhīm had been pushed down to Upper Egypt which they controlled; Cairo and Lower Egypt were governed by the Ottomans. In

¹ Jabartī, op.cit., vol. 2, p.113.

² Ibid., p.133.

Cairo, Ḥasan Pasha named Ismā'īl Bey the shaykh al-balad, and the Amīr al Ḥajj was at first Ḥasan Bey and then Muḥammad Bey.¹ 'Abidī Pasha replaced Muḥammad Yakan as the Walī of Egypt.

Although at first everyone welcomed the ousting of Murād and Ibrāhīm from power, the popularity of Ghāzī Ḥasan in Egypt began to wane. The impressions he gave of a magnanimous ruler who sought only to re-establish order and justice soon changed to those of a rapacious governor concerned with amassing a personal fortune. He emptied the treasuries, seized the private wealth of the rebels and their supporters, and began to tax local citizens, especially the Christians, mercilessly. When his own army began to protest about scanty provisions and insufficient pay, he turned on it furiously. Baldwin quoted one of his addresses: "Are these complaints, or is it bastardy? Will you fight? You shall be paid! But if your spirits are alienated your faith is so degenerated as to suffer these Beys to consign your country and your religions to a Christian Power that seduced them; not a man amongst you shall be spared! Is the terror of the Ottoman forgot?"²

The reference to the Christian power here was no doubt to Russia, although Ainslie reported that at first France was openly

¹His real name was Murād. To avoid confusion and unpleasant association of thoughts, the Kapudan-Pasha changed his name.

²FO 78/7, Baldwin to Carmarthen, Jan. 13, 1787.

on the side of the rebels.¹ The Russian Consul, Baron Thonus, who had recently (1785) taken up his post, had all the time encouraged the rebels against the Porte. When Ḥasan Pasha arrived, the Baron declared that Murād and Ibrāhīm were under the protection of the Empress.² It has already been seen how the French suspected him of having caused the church incident in Alexandria in order to alienate the foreign community from the authorities, and thereby being the only representative in official favour. At the time when Ḥasan Pasha was in Alexandria, and the duumvirate was still ruling Cairo, the two Mamlūks wrote to Thonus asking him to help them³ by approaching Ḥasan and telling him they promised to do all that the Porte demanded of them, and that they humbly begged its pardon. The Kapudan Pasha refused to consider the offer.⁴

Baldwin reported that when Ḥasan Pasha first entered Cairo, the Venetian and French Consuls of Alexandria followed him there with great pomp to pay court to him. But when the rebel Beys made

¹Ainslie reported that on 3 August 1786, Choiseul-Gouffier handed in a memorial to the Porte, asking that the Ottomans recall their fleet from Egypt, and name Murād Bey shaykh al-balad.. FO 78/7, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Aug. 9, 1786.

²In 1783, the Russians had made an alliance with Murād and Ibrāhīm in exchange for permission to have a garrison at Alexandria, Rosetta and Damietta. In 1784, two engineers were sent to Alexandria to prepare for the garrisons. In 1785, a Georgian officer named Maximo Kaskaciow lived with Ibrāhīm for four months as a "relative". Since then, a Russian consulate was established. FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, Sept. 24, 1787.

³FO 78/7, Copie d'une lettre que Ibrahim Bey et Murat Bey du Caire ont écrit à Mr. Le Baron Thonus... n.d.

⁴FO 78/7, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), Jan. 13, 1787.

it known that they had no intention of surrendering, the consuls fled to Alexandria for safety.¹ Baldwin found this situation advantageous to him: "I propose to off for Cairo in a few days to watch my opportunity..."²

The British Consul, acting on the orders laid down for him by Carmarthen, reported his view on the situation in Egypt, and his personal idea of what the outcome would be. He foresaw total victory for Ḥasan Pasha, if he were not recalled to Constantinople because of the impending Russo-Turkish war. There were two reasons for this: the first, that the Ottoman forces were superior to those of the Mamlūks; the second, that the number of Mamlūks who were deserting Murād and Ibrāhīm and promising loyalty to the Ottomans was growing every day. It seemed quite likely to Baldwin that general desertion rather than mere battles would determine the victorious party, since the leading features of the mamlūks were instability and proneness to desertion.³ He also saw in Ḥasan Pasha an excellent warrior who had been "infamously neglected" and "shamefully served".⁴

¹Also because Ḥasan had begun to "borrow" money from the Franks, although Baldwin did not refer to this.

⁴Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Feb. 10, 1787. He was still in Alexandria at the time of writing.

³FO 78/7, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), Jan. 13, 1787.

⁴Ibid., Feb. 9, 1787.

With the Porte supreme in Egypt, Baldwin foresaw the re-establishment of a constitution, but realized that it would have to be only that, and not a reversal of the present order of things. The beys that had been loyal to the Porte would have to be given a vestige of power since "... their weight... in the constitution of Egyptian government was the preservation of Egypt to the Porte".¹ In that case, Britain could easily claim the enforcement of her Capitulations with the help of the Embassy in Constantinople.

The Return of Animosity between Ainslie and Baldwin

Ainslie was at first willing to comply with his orders from London, and correspond on an amicable and regular basis with the Consul-General in Egypt. He wrote Baldwin four letters from 23 October to 22 November 1786, in the space of a month.² Baldwin was obviously touched by this generosity, for he was far too embarrassed to be able to express any gratitude to his superior.

But that was as far as the goodwill between the two men extended, for as soon as business had to be discussed, it was obvious that their viewpoints were totally opposed regarding Britain's position in the Ottoman Empire. Acting on his instructions to reinforce English Capitulations in Egypt, Baldwin asked the Ambassador

¹FO 78/7, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), Feb. 9, 1787.

²These letters are not to be found, but mention is made of them in: FO 78/7, Baldwin to Ainslie (extract), Nov. 29, 1786.

to put pressure on the authorities at the Porte vigorously to acclaim British rights; he was powerless to do very much at the moment since political events in the country gave little indication as to what the government would be like in the future. The Consul also asked Ainslie to send Ghāzī Ḥasan Pasha a letter underlining British rights in Egypt, especially those concerning the navigation of the Red Sea.¹

Ainslie disagreed entirely with Baldwin's approach to the problem of permission for dispatches. He had to make a nominal effort since his instructions on the matter were most explicit. He did not regard the Red Sea route as important enough to outweigh other considerations in Anglo-Ottoman relations. He was much more intent on obtaining the confidence of the Porte than in wanting to seize certain opportunities to obtain concessions for his country. Baldwin, on the other hand, took a more practical approach to the situation: in its pre-occupation with the internal chaos of Egypt, the Porte would undoubtedly rather distractedly produce a ferman enforcing English Capitulations in the country.

When Baldwin asked for the ferman, the Ambassador stopped writing to him. When the Consul complained, Ainslie insisted he had written, but that the letters were being intercepted. "I cannot

¹FO 78/7, Baldwin to Ainslie, Jan. 13, 1787. It was not until March 1787 that Ainslie was able to obtain the papers that Baldwin had asked for. FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, March 10, 1787.

account for the miscarriage of my letters to Egypt. But it must needs be in consequence of general orders from government or treachery on the part of my agent at Alexandria, which I hope to discover very soon."¹ Baldwin continued to write to his superior in Constantinople. By 20 April 1787, he had written seven letters.² And, Ainslie continued to claim "uneasiness" over the fact that none of his letters were reaching the Consul.

Matters came to a head in the summer of 1787. On 17 August, Ainslie sent a circular to all the consuls in the Levant informing them of the Ottoman rupture with Russia. Baldwin did not receive his copy, presumably because it was sent to Cairo, and he had been staying in Alexandria. Baldwin could contain himself no longer, and spoke his mind to the outraged Ambassador who was greatly insulted, and stigmatized the letter as "improper".³ The forced politeness was over, and once again the two men regarded each other as enemies. Baldwin continued to report his actions to Ainslie who never bothered to answer, although he always claimed that he had not received the Consul's letters.⁴

¹FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Feb. 23, 1787.

²FO 78/8, Baldwin to Ainslie, May 27, 1787.

³FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), Dec. 10, 1787.

⁴They are available today, however.

Ainslie's dislike of Baldwin was not only based on a difference of opinion regarding the propriety of demanding British rights in Egypt. He also distrusted the Consul, afraid he would start a Bengal-based business to Suez once again. "I shall only add that should Mr. Baldwin (trusting to his influence with the Beys) have encouraged speculators from Bengal previous to consulting with me, I shall, notwithstanding, most heartily employ my utmost efforts, and use all my credit in order to prevent mischief and losses, although in the present circumstances, I cannot flatter myself much success."¹

The Ambassador had reason to suspect Baldwin. When the latter was on his way to Egypt, he sent the Ambassador a message that he was carrying goods² destined for sale in Alexandria, and in view of the tezkere problem in Egypt, he did not want to have to pay customs on them in Smyrna. The Ambassador answered that he would have to do so, but should be able to enforce the tezkere ruling once in Alexandria; Ainslie saw the Reis Efendi, who promised him personally that a double-duty would not be exacted in Egypt. But the Ambassador found it difficult not to be suspicious of the Consul carrying merchandise, since his instructions specifically forbade any personal trade whatsoever. He was even more suspicious

¹F078/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, May 25, 1787.

²34 bales of cloth

when he found out that Baldwin had not consulted with Consul Hayes in Smyrna, but had instead done so with his dragoman, conclusive proof that his dealings were not entirely legal. He therefore told Baldwin that Hayes had been angry and added: "I am perfectly convinced, sir, you had not the least intention to hurt that gentleman's feelings, and much less to invade the office of British Consul at Smyrna..."¹

The lack of communication between Ambassador and Consul persisted throughout the latter's period of official residence in Egypt. Baldwin received little or no help from Ainslie for the concessions he was able to procure for his country. The Ambassador, on the other hand, was far too disgusted to hide his distaste of Baldwin from the authorities in London. Ainslie tried at first to obey his instructions concerning Egypt by totally ignoring Baldwin; later, he was able to consider the problems of Egypt of minimal importance in the light of others; finally they receded into the background of his thinking as a matter of utter indifference.

¹FO 78/7, Ainslie to Baldwin (copy), Dec. 19, 1786.

Chapter IV

THE YEARS AS CONSUL-GENERAL:

1786 - 1793

The Rule of Hasan Pasha

The defeat of Murād and Ibrāhīm on 4 December 1786 resulted in two major consequences: the rebels were firmly pushed into Upper Egypt, which area they dominated, and, while the Ottoman army ruled over Cairo and Lower Egypt, reinforcements arrived from Cyprus, Syria and the Crimea.¹ On 28 Rabi' II 1201/17 February 1787, the Ottoman forces delivered a blow to the rebels at Amīr Ḍarār in Upper Egypt. A great number of the Mamlūk army was killed, including Lachine Bey, one of Murād's supporters, and many of the Hanadi bedouins who had been fighting for the rebels. The Ottomans continued to press south after the departing Mamlūks, and on 23 Jumādā I 1201/16 March 1787, the seizure of Aswān for Ḥasan Pasha was announced in Cairo. The rebels had been pushed down to Ibrīm in Nubia after a very rough battle during which Ibrāhīm Bey barely escaped, leaving behind his belongings.² A strong Ottoman post was left at Aswān, commanded by Ḥasan Bey at al-Juddawī, and the expeditionary force began to make its way

¹Jabartī. op.cit., vol. 2, p.137.

²FO 78/7, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), March 28, 1787.

back to Cairo, since it could not possibly remain in the south indefinitely.

Towards the end of April, news reached Cairo of the northwards advance of Murād and Ibrāhīm, and by the beginning of Sha'bān 1201/May 1787, their arrival in Girga was announced.¹ Messages between the two warring groups ensued, Ḥasan Pasha hoping to work out some form of agreement, since news from Constantinople indicated an impending Russo-Turkish war and a consequent withdrawal of Ottoman forces from Egypt. But no favourable solution was reached, mostly owing to the lack of agreement as to the number of villages the rebels wished to hold in Upper Egypt, and Ḥasan had to take a decisive step to consolidate his position before leaving the country. On 14 Dhu'l Ḥijja 1201/29 September 1787, he held a divan in which he read a ferman from the Porte in which an amnesty for the rebels was declared, on condition that they remained far in Upper Egypt; Ibrāhīm was confined to Qina, and Murād to Isna. Ismā'īl was to be the Shaykh al-Balad, and Qayṭas Bey the Amir al-Hajj.⁴

The unsettled state of affairs was hardly ideal for Baldwin who had arrived to set up the first British consulate in Egypt for almost thirty years. The conditions were far from being pro-

¹Jabartī, op.cit., p.140.

²Ibid., p.146.

pitious for an attempt to implement the seemingly anachronistic instructions laid down for him in London. Yet there can be no doubt he was overjoyed to be back in Egypt, free to negotiate all he had previously unsuccessfully hoped for, armed this time with protective consular authority.

A commercial treaty with the Beys being utterly inconceivable during Ottoman rule, Baldwin turned with as much fervour as he could to the relatively simple task of opening the Red Sea to British packetboats by having the Hatti Sherif of 1779 rescinded. But he first had to make up his mind about his own views of the political unrest of Egypt, how long he thought it would remain unchanged, and, most important, on whose side British interests lay.

An immensely practical man who lacked the moral righteousness of his Ambassador in Constantinople, Baldwin saw both the preponderance of the Ottomans in Egypt and the return of Murād and Ibrāhīm as useful to Britain, for in either case a settlement could be worked out. In the former, he would rely on British influence at the Porte, and in the latter he could use his own local means of influence. He was careful to analyse the political affairs of the day, and saw in Ḥasan's attempts at reconciliation in the summer of 1787 an unusual step. "Nothing could have engaged the C-Basha to give into such a measure, but to serve as a better

stratagem to obtain his ends..."¹ The reason was the impending Russo-Turkish war, in which case Baldwin foresaw, after the withdrawal of Hasan and his troops, a total victory for the Mamluks.

In the meantime, since it was Hasan Pasha who controlled Cairo and Lower Egypt, Baldwin saw in him a person whose influence would help to secure British rights. He met with the Ottoman admiral at least four times during the latter's stay in the country, and was "graciously treated".² The first meeting took place in Cairo on 6 March 1787 during which the Consul broached the subject of Red Sea navigation. It seemed clear to Baldwin that Hasan liked Ainslie very much, and was willing to do all he could to help the British. But he specified that the Porte would have to sanction his permission of English vessels going to Suez, and suggested that Ainslie obtain a ferman; he asked also that a copy of the English capitulations be sent to Egypt for his own use.³

The second meeting took place on 26 March. Baldwin wished to see Hasan because he had heard that a French vessel was in the Red Sea and was heading for Suez. He wanted to remind the Pasha of his previous statement that he would be willing to allow vessels

¹FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, July 2, 1787.

²FO 78/7, Baldwin to Ainslie (copy), March 28, 1787.

³Ibid.

to go to Suez.¹ Hasan was hesitant at first, but finally gave the landing orders. When somebody placed the edict of 1779 into his hands, he had to revoke the instructions, but after much complication, the vessel, "Venus", was allowed to unload.²

Baldwin was not unaware of the present plight of the French in Egypt. He fully realized that Hasan's rule had had an adverse effect on the French community, especially when it came to the enforced "borrowing" of money, and that the Ottoman admiral personally favoured England. The Consul did not hesitate to flatter Hasan Pasha, offering him presents, and promising to send for pistols from England for him when he was asked to do so. But he wished to have the "Venus" allowed to land at Suez, in order to pave the way for British vessels to come.

Ainslie violently disagreed with Baldwin's manner of thinking. He was far too cautious an individual to see the wisdom of allowing the enemy ship into Suez for purposes of a precedent. On the other hand, he accused Baldwin of utter naïveté in his assessment of Hasan Pasha as a straightforward, honest man who meant what he said; he was, rather, "... a perfect master of dissimulation...", despite his personal sincerity to Ainslie. Baldwin, "... like most Europeans,

¹FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, April 11, 1787.

²The incident relating to the "Venus" and its arrival will be described in some detail on p. 187 below.

misled by exterior appearances, thinks the Turks a heavy people with whom much may be risked...", he complained to Carmarthen.¹ The best example he could offer was that Hasan had already asked the Ambassador for pistols; two pairs had already been ordered for him, one in gold, and the other in silver. He had not mentioned this to Baldwin, undoubtedly hoping to obtain yet another pair.

Ainslie's Reactions to the Affairs of Egypt

The Ambassador was interested in following his instructions to bring pressure to bear upon the Porte to cancel the Hatti Sherif of 1779, to obtain another edict to open the Red Sea route, and if possible, to allow for a treaty of commerce with the Beys. He was extremely cautious in his approach, and always seemed to have good excuses to postpone a serious confrontation with the Reis Efendi. The sequence of events during which he tried to complement his orders shows an inconsistent and hesitant approach to the problem as a whole.

He began the proceedings by sending appropriate presents to the Grand Vezir, to Hasan's agent at the Porte, and to a few other important officials for the mawlid al-nabi² festivities in early

¹FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), July 10, 1787.

²The birthday of the Prophet.

1787.¹ Previously, when he heard of Hasan's attempts to arrange a settlement with the rebel beys in November 1786, he decided to delay addressing the Porte on the "delicate subject" of navigating the Red Sea. He thought it would be wiser to wait until an internal settlement in Egypt was reached.² He was convinced that if he made a step in that direction in February it would "... disoblige the Seraglio, ... alienate the confidence of the Vizier, and ... ruin my credit with the Divan".³

On 20 March, Ainslie had a private meeting with the Grand Vezir in which many topics were discussed. But when the Ambassador tried to bring up the topic of Egypt, he was told that the situation there was so uncertain that no alteration of old arrangements could at present be discussed.⁴

His reaction to the arrival of the "Venus" was an important but detrimental step to the establishment of British rights in Egypt. On 29 March 1787, the "Venus" a frigate of forty guns, arrived at Suez; its commander was François-Etienne Rosily. When Magallon heard of the arrival, he went to Hasan Pasha in order to obtain permission for the vessel to anchor. The Kapudan-Pasha was hesitant

¹FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), Jan. 11, 1787. The gifts cost him 1,000 piastres.

²FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Feb. 23, 1787.

³Ibid.

⁴FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, March 24, 1787.

at first, but finally agreed when the Frenchman produced a letter to Choiseul-Gouffier, from Hasan Pasha himself, promising to allow French vessels into Suez.¹ The Kapudan Pasha made it very clear, however, that no trading could take place.²

It has already been mentioned above that Baldwin was also anxious to have the "Venus" anchor at Suez in order to create a precedent for British ships.³ He was particularly pleased when he found out that East India Company dispatches had been carried by M. Rambour on board the "Venus" which he delivered to the Consul.⁴ Rosily also offered, obviously in return for Baldwin's help in soliciting Hasan's permission, to take letters to India.⁵

On 26 May, Ainslie made an application to the Porte to protest against the arrival of the "Venus". Pisani, his dragoman, told the Reis Efendi that Britain had forbidden its ships to go to Suez to please the Porte; in return, the latter had given the

¹ Choiseul-Gouffier was convinced he was able to persuade Hasan to write the letter only because the Kapudan-Pasha was unaware of the whole situation of the Red Sea route. Corr. Pol., Turquie, 172, Choiseul-Gouffier to de Castries, May 10, 1785.

² Corr. Coms., Le Caire, Tome 25, Mure to de Castries, May 4, 1787.

³ He did not realize that the coming of the ship caused another visit by Frenchmen, this time to Isma'il Bey, who promised to allow French ships and trading vessels to Suez. The Mamluk wrote this down: "Vous pouvez expédier des navires et des marchandises à Suez ... Ils n'auront rien à craindre de là par aucun de nous...". Precis d'une lettre d'Ismail Bey aux commandants français dans l'Inde, 24 Rajab 1201/12 May 1787.

⁴ FO 78/7, Baldwin to Ainslie, April 20, 1787.

⁵ Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, May 21, 1787. Rambour returned to India on May 27. Egypt 5a, Baldwin to E.I.C., July 2, 1787.

French permission to anchor there. Pisani added that the British government was angry, and demanded equal privileges.¹ "The Reis Effendi received this unexpected declaration with visible signs of surprise and bad humour."² He swore that the French had made no overtures to him on the subject, and that the Porte was also furious. Two messages had already been sent to Hasan Pasha in Cairo calling on him to stop all such permission.

Ainslie also sent Pisani to the President of the Chancery, and his secretary to the Grand Vezir; both men confirmed the message of the Reis Efendi.³ The Grand Vezir offered to produce the register of the commands that had been sent to Cairo, but the Ambassador "prudently declined" the offer. The Grand Vezir added that so long as he remained in office he would never allow for French navigation of either the Red Sea or the Black Sea.

The third meeting that Baldwin had with Hasan Pasha was in April 1787, when he heard of the impending arrival at Suez of Lord William Murray,⁴ the brother of the Duke of Atholl, with the coffee fleet from Jedda. While in Jedda, Murray had seen the vezir of the Sharif of Mecca who consented to help the British with their dispatches,

¹FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, June 9, 1787.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Lord William Murray afterwards stayed in Alexandria as a guest in Baldwin's house. Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Court of Directors, July 2, 1787.

and who wrote a letter to King George confirming this.¹ Baldwin was especially pleased, and hoped to be able to appoint an agent there in order to cultivate the friendship of the Sharif.²

The Consul asked Hasan for permission for Murray to land, so a ferman was issued giving the Englishman full protection. The Kapudan-Pasha once again asked Baldwin to obtain from Ainslie a document attesting to the Porte's concurrence of the permission.

To the Consul's great chagrin, all that arrived from the Porte was a reprimand to Hasan for having allowed the "Venus" into Suez, and a reminder of the threats of the Hatti Sherif of 1779. Baldwin realized that the reprimand had been instigated by Ainslie, and could not fully comprehend the reason. He had received no letters from the Ambassador except for the few at the beginning of his residence, and could only interpret the action as a deliberate plan to damage his personal standing in Egypt. What made Ainslie's silence even more difficult to cope with was that Hasan Pasha began to become more insistent about the gift of pistols; Baldwin persistently but futilely transmitted the request to his superior in Constantinople, and consequently had to make embarrassing excuses.

Ainslie seemed totally unaware of the predicament his actions had placed Baldwin in. He went about in his non-committal fashion

¹Egypt 6, Vezir to Murray (translation), April 16, 1787.

²Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, July 2, 1787.

of sounding out the Porte on the question of Egypt. On 10 July he reported a confidential conversation he had had with the Grand Vezir, during which he had tried to "feel His Highness's pulse" about the Red Sea.¹ The Ambassador said that the only reasonable objection to having English ships in the Red Sea had been removed by the ousting of Murād and Ibrāhīm from power. He pointed out that while Hasan Pasha had not proved indisposed to grant the "Venus" permission to enter Suez, the British had to insist on equality. Ainslie also tried to point out to the Grand Vezir all the advantages the Porte and Egypt could derive from revoking the edict of 1779.

The Grand Vezir, however, "... seemed perplexed at the very mention of Egypt...", and admitted that the situation was far more complicated than Ainslie had made it out to be. He added that "... until the beast was killed, he could not dispose of the skin...", implying, of course, that the rebels were not yet certainly beaten.² He also firmly stated that Hasan Pasha would not dare to disobey his instructions, but had to allow the "Venus" to anchor at Suez, because he simply had no force to oppose a ship with forty guns. The interview ended with the Grand Vezir thanking Ainslie for his views regarding Egypt "... of which we might in due time consult

¹FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), July 10, 1787.

²Ibid.

together".¹

After that, Ainslie sent generous gifts for Ramaḍān to the Reis Efendi, his secretary, dragoman, and the Grand Vezir's private treasurer, which the French Ambassador referred to as having caused great distaste at the Porte.² He then attempted to bring up the topic once again, but was repulsed and told the time had not yet come for discussion. He was also told he would only damage his personal influence by insisting at the present time. The Ambassador was careful to report this to Carmarthen so that Baldwin's wrath, of which he was not unaware, could be seen in its proper content. Ainslie firmly believed he understood the Porte's viewpoint, but added "... I would not risk the disobliging Mr. Baldwin by an appearance of partiality to my own opinion in opposition to his recommendation and the request of the Captain Bashaw".³

After leaving Egypt, Lord William Murray visited Constantinople where he arrived on 9 September 1787. He brought with him a letter from Baldwin to the Ambassador. Ainslie insisted, when he learned the facts of Murray's arrival at Suez, that Ḥasan Pasha had only

¹ Ibid.

² "Le chevalier Ainslie à force d'intrigues, d'agitations, et je puis dire sans exagerer, à force d'extravagance, est parvenue à se rendre odieux à tout le ministère; Rashid ... lui temoigne le mépris le plus insultant." Corr. Pol., Turquie, 176, Choiseul-Gouffier to Montmorin, Dec. 28, 1787.

³ FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), July 10, 1787.

allowed him to disembark because he had come with the coffee fleet, and therefore under Turkish colours. He also seemed convinced that Hasan had "... got to the bottom of Mr. Baldwin's schemes...", and that was the reason for his desire to have the Porte issue a ferman allowing the Red Sea traffic.¹ Ainslie, on the other hand, was sure that the problem could be put aside for the time being, especially since Choiseul-Gouffier had promised to prevent French vessels from navigating in the Red Sea.²

This promise from the French Ambassador somehow relieved Ainslie of the pressure of the problem. He now felt he could pursue his instructions concerning Egypt at leisure. He took a few indirect steps, such as "... feeling ... the pulse of some of the leading members of the divan".³ He did it under the pretext of wanting to facilitate British correspondence from India to England, but ultimately aimed for exclusive British rights of navigation in the Red Sea. The method he had in mind was to organize an ad hoc conference on the subject, but its success would depend entirely on the utmost secrecy and discretion of all parties concerned. For this he would need the aid of douceurs, and asked

¹FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), Sept. 10, 1787.

²Ibid. There is no evidence to support this statement by Ainslie in the French archives.

³Ibid.

£500 of Carmarthen for the purpose.¹

When he was in the process of writing the above messages to Carmarthen, Ainslie said he had just been called upon to see the Grand Vezir about an urgent matter. Fifteen days later, he reported the proceedings. The Grand Vezir wanted to offer the British government a commission as a sign of the strong ties of friendship with the Ottoman Empire; the commission was to supply the Empire with one million piastres worth of rope, nails, tin and powder. The next day, the Grand Vezir himself brought up the subject of Ainslie's request for the use of the dispatch route. He told the Ambassador that it would be discussed and settled to Ainslie's satisfaction after Bayram when the pressure of the break with Russia might have diminished.²

A fortnight later, Ainslie reported a meeting he had with the Grand Vezir during which a promise at last was given: at the first opportunity the Grand Vezir would personally ask the Sultan for permission. It was such a delicate matter, that it had to be kept a secret; it could not possibly be submitted for discussion in the Cabinet.³

¹FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), Sept. 10, 1787.

²FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Sept. 25, 1787.

³FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), Oct. 10, 1787.

The Ambassador seemed to have been happily unaware that the Ottomans were discreetly and very effectively side-tracking him with futile promises. Even the French Ambassador noticed that his British counterpart had become a nuisance at the Porte.¹ But Ainslie remarked: "I flatter myself that the affair of the navigation in the Red Sea will now succeed, in which case your Lordship will approve and render justice to my economy of the public money."²

Fifteen days later, the Ambassador addressed a memorial to the Porte asking for permission to have British packet boats in Suez.³ He seemed convinced that if this were granted, an automatic annulment of the Hatti Sherif would ensue. But he was worried at the delay of his application. It was decided to postpone consideration of the affair until Hasan Pasha returned to Constantinople. Ainslie was anxious to meet with officials before then, so he contrived a meeting on 5 November with the Grand Vezir, whom he considered a friend.⁴ But the latter refused to commit himself until the arrival of Hasan Pasha.

¹See above, p. 192, n.2.

²FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Oct. 10, 1787.

³FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Oct. 25, 1787.

⁴FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Nov. 10, 1787.

When, soon after, Hasan Pasha arrived in Constantinople, laden with considerable booty from Egypt,¹ Ainslie went to see him. The Ottoman admiral received the Ambassador "in his arms",² and expressed all the appropriate joy at meeting his old friend. Ainslie proudly noted that he was as confidential and open in his manner as he had been before the expedition to Egypt. But when the Ambassador mentioned the question of the Red Sea in general, and that of the "Venus" in particular, Hasan became visibly embarrassed and admitted that the French Consul and Rosily had made "important" offers which could not be overlooked.³ But Ainslie confidently told him that the British permission for the dispatch route depended on him. Hasan smilingly replied: "I obtained for Your Excellency the exemption of the duty of the masteria, and I shall also procure you this much more important passage, in hopes to secure the friendship of Great Britain."⁴

It was not surprising that the Porte used any excuse to delay the question. The French mission in Constantinople had told the Ottomans that the British were making arrangements to furnish the Russ-

¹Including 3 large ships full of coffee, rice, and other produce. FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Nov. 24, 1787.

²Ibid.

³Baldwin reported that the French had paid Hasan 60,000 dollars. Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Feb. 10, 1787.

⁴FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Nov. 24, 1787.

ians with warships and officers. The Grand Vezir and Hasan Pasha told Pisani, Ainslie's dragoman, that until all doubts of the validity of the accusation had been dispelled, a pronouncement on the Red Sea matter would have to wait. However, if the Ambassador could immediately and formally contradict the rumour, the delay would no longer exist.¹

On 12 December, Ainslie met with the Grand Admiral, and was able to convince him of the untruth of the French story. The Ambassador was then told that his country would not be denied the navigational rights already granted to France, but there would only be one condition for this: the Ottoman Empire needed to buy or borrow warships from Britain. An alternative condition would be for Britain to promise to keep Ottoman coasts and islands free from Russian trade. Ainslie firmly replied that "private demands of friendship" and "public national engagements" were distinct and separate, and should not be confused.²

The year 1788 saw the end of Ainslie's hopes of settling the matter. Somehow, British aspirations for the dispatch route were mentioned in the foreign gazette of Constantinople, and France and Holland immediately put in their claims for equal privileges. The Grand Council had to put off consideration of the issue, since it

¹FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Dec. 10, 1787.

²FO 78/8, Ainslie to Carmarthen, Dec. 28, 1787.

did not want to alienate France. Ainslie complained to the Grand Vezir that he had broken his promise. "The worthy man appeared much mortified, and uttered with a sigh, oh, the Council, the Council."¹

British merchants in Constantinople tried to rally to the cause, and offered a loan at 8⁰/o interest to the Porte, but the latter refused, saying it was not in need of money. A further attempt was made when the Ambassador agreed with Hasan Pasha to have three English merchant ships delivered at Jedda for Ottoman trade to Suez on the condition that Britain be accorded the much sought-for permission. Hasan promised to give an answer, but never did so.²

And so, a deadlock ensued. Ainslie could think of no other way to approach the problem, and the Porte was only too anxious to delay a formal reply, always afraid of French reaction. The Ambassador continued, however, to make overtures; he received vague answers, and regularly reported to Carmarthen that he had not given up. He was clearly not convinced of the British rights of navigation, for he would have firmly instead of furtively asked for a ferman.

In November, Ainslie received information from a "friend" at the

¹FO 78/9, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), Jan. 10, 1788.

²Ibid.

Seraglio concerning the reason for the delay of his request.

In October, the French Ambassador had insinuated that British vessels were loading goods in Bengal for sale in Suez. Choiseul-Gouffier had therefore assumed that the Porte had given its permission, since the British had not reached an independent agreement with the Beys. He claimed equal rights, citing the Capitulations.¹

Ainslie made no effort to counteract this rumour. He felt that France's position vis-à-vis the Porte was fast sinking, and consequently did not wish to press for anything unusual in the fear that it would be improper. He was absolutely convinced he would never be able to obtain the ferman. And if a dispatch boat had to go through the Red Sea, he made it clear to London that he "... would prefer that the Porte should think that I had not been consulted, nay was totally ignorant of the matter..."²

That, in conclusion, was probably his wish from the beginning. Baldwin realized, after the first two years of frustrated communication with his ambassador, that he would have to rely entirely on his own means to obtain whatever he could for Britain in Egypt. The connection between the two men practically ceased to exist after this period, for although Baldwin sent fairly regular reports to Constantinople, he never received a reply.

¹FO 78/9, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), Nov. 15, 1788.

²FO 78/9, Ainslie to Carmarthen (cypher), Nov. 8, 1788.

French Attempts to Use the Route

Baldwin, at first relying on Ainslie to obtain the necessary documents for Egypt, had little to do except follow the affairs of the French and the Russians, and try his best to thwart any plans they had to penetrate Egypt. He was quick to find out about the French company that had been recently established in Marseilles to trade with India via Suez.¹ He learned that Magallon was the agent for the company, and had bought half of the homes and warehouses of one side of the European street in Alexandria for the purpose. The Consul also learned that the company had increased its capital from fifteen to forty million livres.²

The Marseilles company also had the interest of Antūn Kassīs Fir'awn, former Customs Master of Cairo, who was a Count of the Holy Roman Empire. The wily Syrian had always been interested in the India trade at Suez, and had kept in close touch with a former French dragoman in Egypt, Venzure de Paradis.³ From the correspondence between these two men, it is obvious that Fir'awn had always

¹The French India Company had had the same objection to trade with Egypt as had its British counterpart (see Chapter I, above). Although it had promoted the 1785 Truguet agreements, it did not consider them applicable without the ratification of the Porte. And so a new company was formed in Marseilles, directed by two merchants Audibert and Seymandi, with the sole purpose of selling India goods in Egypt, and parts of the Ottoman Empire. Clément, op.cit., p.264.

²Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Feb. 10, 1787.

³See Chapter II, above.

been partial to the French during the years of his rule of the customs. With the establishment of a company especially designed to engage in the trade which always concerned him, he willingly gave all the help needed to make the venture successful. He warned, however, that without a ferman from the Porte to sanction the navigation of the Red Sea, the business would not be safe.¹ Once again, Baldwin was aware of the transactions between Fir'awn and the Marseilles Company, and reported them to the Court of Directors in London.²

In October 1787, he reported that the French had ordered cargo from India, and that their ships were soon to be expected. Baldwin realized that the French considered the Ottoman Empire to be in a state of decline, and that the approaching ships were a manifestation, by defiance, of the situation; furthermore, they were eager for a footing in Egypt once the weakness of the Empire took firmer shape. "They are so subtle in their schemes. They know the value of Egypt..."³

But the Consul was not always correct in his assessment of the meanings of French movement in Egypt. One particular incident that occurred in the latter part of 1787 presents an interesting example of how his unfounded suspicions caused him to inadvertently help his

¹Corr. Pol., Turquie, 174, Faraun to Venezure (transl.), Aug. 23, 1786.

²Fir'awn lived in Trieste, after travelling to Leghorn and Venice. Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Court of Directors, July 2, 1787.

³Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Oct. 21, 1787.

country, and at the same time allowed him to remain unaware of certain truths of the situation.

On 28 October, a French ship arrived in Alexandria from Marseilles. It carried one passenger (aside from servants) and had no merchandise, thus arousing the suspicions of the ever-watchful Baldwin. He was not unaware of French designs to uphold Holland against Britain, and could only think that the French were planning some sort of blow to British possessions in India. The passenger claimed to be a doctor, which Baldwin found very difficult to believe.¹ He noted that the Frenchman brought letters for the French Consul, and did not allow his servants to disembark. Baldwin, by nature eminently suited to cloak-and-dagger intrigues, decided to send his own cook, a Frenchman, to the ship to converse with the cook there. The "doctor" turned out to be a "Marquis", a "General", and a "Cordon Rouge", and was going to India to fight the British there. He had formerly been a captive of the British, but somehow had managed to escape.

The same evening, Baldwin dined with some Frenchmen of Alexandria, and obtained even more information about the visitor: his name was the Marquis de Montcamp, and he had set out from Paris. The Consul then immediately decided to take it upon himself to follow the two paths now open to him: first, to inform the British settlements in India of the revolution in Holland, and of an impending

¹Doctors did not usually hire ships on their own accounts. Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Nov. 6, 1787.

outbreak of Anglo-French hostilities as a consequence; second, to detain Montcamp in Egypt as long as possible.

Baldwin had just learned about the uprising in Holland¹ when the essentially pro-French elements controlled the states, and how the Princess of Orange had been insulted on her way to The Hague. He assumed that in case of an outbreak of war, Holland and France would certainly be against England and Prussia. He was, moreover, sure that the Dutch East Indies would be the scene of any Anglo-French hostilities, so he felt the urgency of having to warn the government in India of the events. He sent the copies of the letter by three different routes: to Jedda and Mukhā (by sea); to Jedda and Mukhā (land) to Muscat; and, to Damascus and Basra.²

To accomplish the mission of keeping Montcamp in Egypt as long as possible, he instructed Rosetti³ to keep the Frenchman in Cairo for thirty days, and "... to amuse him with promises and excuses and disappointments..."⁴ The Venetian merchant sent word to Ismā'īl's kāhya that Montcamp had been sent to conduct a French expedition to Suez. The kāhya persuaded his chief to write a letter

¹Not only from local gossip, but also from the Leyden Gazette, and the Courier de l'Europe which he sent to India.

²FO 24/1, Baldwin to the Presidency of Any One of the British Settlements in the East Indies, Oct. 30, 1787.

³Baldwin did not actually mention Rosetti, but Magallon's report revealed the Venetian's rôle. Furthermore, Baldwin was in Alexandria, and could not have done much in Cairo.

⁴Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Nov. 6, 1787.

forbidding Montcamp's departure. It was only after much work by the loyal Magallon to get Ismā'īl to revoke his letter that the traveller was finally allowed to leave Cairo for Suez.¹ Even in Suez there were attempts to forbid his departure until Magallon persuaded Riḍwān Bey to give him leave.

Montcamp and Magallon were very annoyed at the delay, and even more so that it should have been the British, so unimportant in Egypt, that were responsible for it. "Vous voyés, ... comment les anglais, qui ne sont presque rien en Egypte, font encore un dernier effort pour nous faire échouer."²

The effort was an expensive one for Baldwin. The cost of sending the three dispatches amounted to 4,450 Turkish piastres.³ To detain Montcamp was also expensive: 160 piastres for obtaining information of the identity of the traveller; 1,500 piastres as a douceur to Ismā'īl Bey; 1,000 piastres to Ismā'īl's kāhya, and, 400 piastres to Riḍwān Bey. The total in English money amounted to £938.15s.⁴ Baldwin did not ask the East India Company for it, since the government in London was equally concerned.

¹Magallon's version of the incident conflicts with that of Montcamp. Both sources reveal the delay caused by the British, but the former claimed that it was with the help of the Customs Master Yūsuf Kassāb that he was able to bribe Ismā'īl to revoke the orders he had given. Corr. Cons., 1e Caire, 25, Magallon, Nov. 17, 1787.

²Corr. Cons., 1e Caire, 25, Montcamp, Nov. 8, 1787.

³At the rate of 2s. 6d. per piastre.

⁴FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, June 20, 1788.

But Baldwin did not realize that Montcamp's mission had been to woo the Sharif of Mecca; this he did, a fact entirely unknown to the British Consul.¹ Montcamp was surreptitiously able to intercept a packet of letters addressed to Baldwin that he gave instead to Mure, the French Consul in Alexandria.² Baldwin did not seem to notice this, or if he did, he certainly made no mention of it in his reports to London.

On 31 July 1788, Baldwin announced the impending arrival of a second French ship (the "Venus" was the first) to Suez. It had come from Pondicherry with three hundred bales of piece goods, but somehow it never made the journey all the way to Suez; it turned back after reaching Mukhā. Baldwin did not believe the French explanation that the return of the vessel was due to bad weather; he was convinced that Montcamp had been delayed for so long at Mukhā on his way to Pondicherry that he had persuaded the captain of the ship to turn back so he could hurry his message.³

Almost a year later, the second French ship actually docked at Suez. It was the "Prince de Condé", and had come from Pondicherry with 29,400 pieces of Bengal muslin.⁴ Baldwin was angry and frustrated

¹Masson, Histoire du commerce français dans le levant au xviii^e siècle, p.581. Clément's version does not entirely agree with this. He claims that Montcamp's mission was to send dispatches to the government in Pondicherry. Clément, op.cit., p.265.

²AE, B_I, 113, Mure to de Castries, Nov. 4, 1787.

³There is no evidence to support Baldwin's theory. Masson, op.cit., p.583, confirms the French version.

⁴Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, July 7, 1789.

that, in view of the total lack of British trade on the route, the merchandise was allowed down with "little hesitation".¹ The Consul set his agents out to sabotage the ship, but Magallon, ready for such an event after the Montcamp incident, stood in the way. The cargo was sold in Cairo.² Baldwin desperately appealed to Dundas, probably his warmest supporter, to persuade the government to encourage British ships to use the Red Sea route. He could not understand how Britain, a close friend of the Ottoman Empire, was not making use of such a practical route whereas the French were doing so, and without trouble.³

But he continued attempts to emulate their activity. In August 1789 Ismā'il Bey gave Magallon a commission to have a French ship take a tribute of wheat, biscuit, and rice to Constantinople. 'Umar Agha (chavush⁴ of Hasan Pasha) was appointed to work out the arrangements with Mure. But Baldwin went to 'Umar and persuaded him to hire a British ship instead. Magallon complained to Ismā'il, but the latter was powerless to change the situation. When the British ship "Watkins" sailed for Constantinople, it unfortunately met with disaster on the island of Tenedos in the Archipelago, and could

¹FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, June 21, 1789.

²Corr. Cons., le Caire, 25, Magallon to Castries, June 6, 1789.

³It is worth while here to note that despite Baldwin's annoyance at the "Prince de Condé's" successful mission, Magallon complained that the cargo was too limited to satisfy the authorities in Egypt. Also, the "Prince de Condé" was the last ship sent by the Marseilles Company; after this, the establishment declined.

⁴A personal attendant who carried messages.

not continue the journey. Ismā'il's wrath knew no bounds, for he had to send presents to Sultan Selim to make up for the loss, and he naturally directed his ire at Baldwin.¹ Undaunted, the Consul and Rosetti offered to take the commission for the sending of the presents, but were brusquely turned down.² It was at this point that Baldwin must have realized that the rule of Ismā'il Bey was of great advantage to the French community; he must have then begun to wish for the return of Murād and Ibrāhīm.

The Departure of Hasan, and ultimate return of the Duumvirate

It has already been mentioned that Hasan Pasha was obliged to leave Egypt in 1787 in order to return to Constantinople because of the Russo-Turkish war. Baldwin had his fourth meeting with him as the Kapudan-Pasha was leaving Alexandria. The Consul went up to the ship to bid Hasan farewell.³ Once again Baldwin asked him about British navigation of the Red Sea, and the reply was in the affirmative, but with the stipulation that only dispatches and not merchandise would be allowed. The Consul reported Hasan's pessimism about leaving Egypt at so unpropitious a time,

¹There is evidence, however, that some of the cargo was saved. FO 78/10, Ainslie to Leeds, July 28, 1789.

²Corr. Cons., le Caire, 25, Magallon to Castries, Aug. 24, 1789.

³Egypt 5A, Baldwin to Carmarthen, Oct. 16, 1787.

and told Baldwin, "Consul, I am disgraced!"¹

The departure of the Ottoman army, leaving Ismā'īl Bey as shaykh-al-balad, provided an excellent opportunity for the Beys in the south to regain their positions. In November 1787 news reached Cairo of the arrival of the mamlūks of Upper Egypt at Aṣyūt. Together with their men, they began to push slowly northwards, and threatened Cairo if Ismā'īl did not consent to make peace. By February 1788, they had reached Banī Suwayf, quite clearly determined never to return to Upper Egypt, and not to respond to Ismā'īl's attempts at negotiation.

During this period, many mamlūks loyal to Murād and Ibrāhīm pretended to desert to the opposing camp, but Ismā'īl arrested them despite their alleged vows of fidelity. Of the eighteen kāshifs imprisoned by the Shaykh al-Balad, eight were given certain restricted liberty. Of these, two became friendly with Baldwin, and visited him several times: they were Qayṭas Kāshif, and Salīm Kāshif. They took the Consul into their confidence, and explained Ibrāhīm's great need for foreign allies. The rebels already had the help of Russia, but did not seem to be very satisfied with Baron Thonus, the Consul. They were anxious to win the friendship of the "Emperor of Germany"² and were willing to offer him commercial settle-

¹ Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.28.

² Presumably that of Austria. Some connection may be seen with the fact that even W. G. Browne, the scholar and traveller, had referred to Rosetti, who was the Austrian Consul, as that of Germany. Browne, Travels in Africa, Egypt, Syria, p.37.

ments, and even a garrison in Alexandria, in return for a refusal to accept peace with the Ottomans unless Egypt, under Murād and Ibrāhīm, was proclaimed independent. The kashifs asked Baldwin to be their ambassador, and offered to pay him any price. The Consul had to refuse, because his "... station and duty admitted of no choice...", but he wrote to London asking for advice on how to deal with the problem.¹

The rôle of the Russians during the rule of Ḥasan Pasha and immediately afterwards was an important one during the exile of the duumvirate. It has already been mentioned that it was to Thonus that the rebel Beys turned when they learned of the arrival of Ḥasan Pasha in Alexandria in 1786. Rumours in Cairo after the Pasha's departure referred to the continued help of Russians, disguised as mamlūks in the entourage of Ibrāhīm. Another story referred to the arrival of a Russian officer in Alexandria from Constantinople who hired a bedouin to take him to Mount Sinai; Baldwin said it was quite clear that the Russian had been to Upper Egypt to join the rebel forces.²

On 31 July 1788, Baldwin reported that Thonus was in Xarte in disguise. He had left Egypt and was headed for Leghorn.³ A few

¹FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, April 2, 1788. He never received a reply.

²Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, May 21, 1787.

³FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, July 31, 1788.

weeks later he reported the arrival of the Russian consul at Damietta on board a Russian frigate of forty guns. When he alighted, he explained that there was nothing to fear from his mission. Baldwin noted that the French agent at Damietta, Ribaud, had gone on board the ship, strengthening the viewpoint that France and Russia were allied in their designs on Egypt. Thonus remained in Egypt for fifteen days, during which time he sent letters inland, presumably to the rebels, and waited for answers. He left on 25 August.

He returned on 9 September.¹ Two officers of Ismā'īl conferred with him on board his ship. He proposed to them a peace between the two factions in the country, and offered to act as intermediary. Somehow the officers, acting on the orders of the suspicious Shaykh al-Balad to reach an agreement with the rebels, thus being in a position to challenge the Porte. Convinced of his treachery, Ismā'īl sent him to the Citadel where he was imprisoned,² and waited for orders from Constantinople as to how to deal with him.³ Baldwin then realized that the Russian fleet everyone had been whispering

¹Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Sept. 16, 1788.

²Ribaud was also imprisoned, but later released.

³Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Sept. 23, 1788.

about¹ was not going to appear, since rumours had it that it had been destroyed. With the arrest of Thonus, the Englishman was convinced of Russian complicity against the Ottomans: "This long-premeditated design of the Russians has now received the highest stamp of authenticity."²

With Thonus held by the government of Cairo, the rebels were cut off from a source of help. The situation was made worse by the execution of the Russian Consul which Baldwin reported in March 1780.³ In the meantime, the Porte had sent Ismā'īl orders to fight the rebels since they had gone past the territorial limits allotted to them by Ḥasan Pasha before his departure. In Šāfar 1203/November 1788 an indecisive battle took place, in which many were killed and injured, but no victors apparent. The situation between the two camps remained deadlocked until the outbreak of the plague in early 1791 when the disease ravaged the country and upset the balance of power.

Baldwin claimed that the disease had come from Constantinople on a French vessel, "L'amiable Marie". There were several infected

¹The rumour must have reached London, for Leeds wrote a very secret note to Ainslie in early 1790 to warn him that a draft of a Russian project had been discovered. This was that a squadron would attempt to take Ottoman possessions in and around the Red Sea, to destroy Jedda, Medina and Mecca, and even to carry off the tomb of Muḥammad. FO 78/11, Leeds to Ainslie (cypher), Jan. 8, 1790.

²FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, Sept. 23, 1788.

³Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, March 14, 1790.

slaves on board when it landed in Alexandria. Some died in the city, and the rest were sent to Cairo where Ismā'īl brought some for mamlūks.¹ Soon the illness seized the Shaykh al-Balad and many of his followers. Ismā'īl died in March, and a large number of his house and following also perished with him. In Alexandria, the Europeans, who always practised a rigid enforcement of quarantine, were spared, with the exception of the Spanish agent and his wife.² In Cairo, a French merchant, a priest, and seven of their servants caught it and died.³ It is perhaps noteworthy to add here that it was during this outbreak of the epidemic that Baldwin worked on a cure for the plague that he was to publish later.⁴

The rebel beys had somehow managed to keep away from the infection, so that while their enemies were immobilised by the disease, they were busily gathering strength. On 8 July 1791, Murād and Ibrāhīm reached Hilwān, and on 16 July, they entered Cairo.⁵ 'Uthmān Bey Toppal, Ismā'īl's successor as shaykh al-balad, escorted the triumphant Murād and Ibrāhīm into Cairo. "So are most of the revolutions in Egypt performed. More like the defeat of a Minister in

¹ Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.252.

² FO 24/1, Baldwin to Leeds, April 16, 1791.

³ Ibid.

⁴ He enclosed the first draft of the cure in: FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Sept. 17, 1791. See Appendix X for the list of Baldwin's publications.

⁵ Baldwin had predicted this in April. "... we look for /the return of the rebels/ in July next." FO 24/1, Baldwin to Leeds, April 16, 1791.

England - by the desertion of his friends than the triumph of powerful armies."¹

By the end of July 1791, Murād and Ibrāhīm were once more in power in Egypt. They made their victorious way up to the Citadel on 26 Dhu'l Qa'da 1205/28 July 1791 where the Pasha Muḥammad 'Izzat clothed them in the traditional garments, and acknowledged their right to rule. A short while later, in early Ṣafar 1206/September-October 1791, an amnesty arrived from the Porte for the duumvirate.² Ibrāhīm once again became shaykh al-balad, and Murād resumed his former position as the effective ruler of Egypt.

Consular Activity

Baldwin was no doubt relieved at the return of the former rulers of Egypt. Ismā'īl's marked preference for the French, and his adamant determination to obey the Porte did not help the Englishman to accomplish much as Consul-General. He had not been totally ineffectual during the two and a half years of Ismā'īl's rule, however.

In the early part of 1788, he announced that he had obtained an order from Ismā'īl's government to allow the East India Company

¹Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Sept. 17, 1791.

²Jabartī, op.cit., vol. 2, p.226.

dispatches and passengers to land at Suez.¹ It is not unlikely that Rosetti obtained the permission, for the Venetian merchant lived in Cairo, and knew Ismā'il well; Baldwin, on the other hand, remained in Alexandria throughout his stay in Egypt, except for occasional visits to Cairo.² He explained his decision to live where he did by claiming he had to keep a close watch on the activity of the port, besides having to follow the movements of the French. He was careful to add that he did not particularly enjoy his life in Alexandria which was "... a perfect dereliction from everything pleasant..."³

Despite the permission for use of the Red Sea route, it is remarkable how little advantage was taken of it. Aside from the sending of the triplicate letters to the Indian Presidencies⁴ its further use was limited. On 13 May 1790, St. Leger and Colier left London, and arrived in Alexandria on 14 June. They carried public dispatches for India⁵ and went straight to Cairo where they arrived three days later. There Rosetti helped them to buy

¹He announced it on 2 April 1788. Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas.

²Wood, op.cit., p.173, erroneously claims that Baldwin spent the years in Cairo.

³Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Morton, Dec. 18, 1789.

⁴See p.203, above.

⁵There is no evidence to support Hoskin's statement that the two men were French agents, and Baldwin detained them purposely in Egypt. Hoskins, op.cit., p.43, n.65.

necessary provisions that amounted to 3,800 Turkish dollars in value.¹ They made their way to Suez, but were delayed in sailing because they could not find a ship to take them. It was not until 29 June that they were finally able to leave.

Baldwin was excessively annoyed that the route had fallen into such disuse that it was becoming increasingly impractical to use it in an emergency. He personally continued to use it in order to keep the British in India constantly aware of European affairs. On 6 November 1790, his letter to the Court of Directors in London was to accompany a packet coming from India.² In the same letter he reported having sent a dispatch to India on 2 July in which he sent a report of events in Europe.

This despatch was addressed to the "Governor General or President of Any One of the British Settlements in the East Indies".³ In it, Baldwin spoke of the current political situation of Europe, and enclosed copies of the Leyden Gazette, the Courier de l'Europe and two Avignon Gazettes. He also mentioned the need for a constantly available vessel at Suez for emergencies. His suggestion was ignored. Thus, in April 1791, when an English major⁴ was on his

¹This included Rosetti's services, as well as clothes and food. The list of what was purchased is enclosed in Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Morton, July 2, 1790.

²Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Morton, Nov. 6, 1790.

³FO 24/1, July 2, 1790. Baldwin sent the dispatches on two routes: via Aleppo on dromedary express, and via Jedda.

⁴Major McDonald. See Chapter V, below.

way to India, he could find no boat to take him down the Red Sea; he was obliged to change his route via Aleppo and Basra.

At the beginning of his residence as Consul-General, Baldwin often used French vessels in Alexandria to send his letters to Europe. He seemed to have discontinued the practice after 1790, presumably because of the interception by Montcamp,¹ although he never specifically gave any reasons for doing so.

In the absence of having any rigorous and regular work to do as a Consul, especially since his services as agent to the East India Company were negligible, Baldwin busily occupied himself with any event he could seize upon to further British interests. Two episodes were concerned with Moroccan princes that had come to Egypt. On 20 March 1788, Mulay Zayid,² one of the sons of Sidi Muhammad ibn 'Abdallah, the Sultan of Morocco, on his way back from the pilgrimage in Mecca, set up camp outside Alexandria. He had the unfortunate reputation of always being in need of money, a fact he was happily unaware of. One day, he decided to enter the city, and made a great ceremonial fuss as he did so, after which he made his way to the house of a shaykh. There he set up his court, and announced that he was ready to receive the visits of the foreign consuls. When no one appeared, he became very angry, and had to resort

¹See above, p. 205.

²This was probably an error. It is more likely to have been Mulay Yazid.

to sending letters to Rosetti, Mure and Baldwin, stating that he wished to borrow money from them.¹ All three men refused the appeal.

On 27 March Mulay Salami, another Moroccan Prince, arrived. He had been away from his country for ten years, and was married to one of Murad Bey's dancers.² After leaving Cairo, he went to Alexandria. While he was there none of the consuls ventured to pay their respects, so he instead went to see Baldwin.³ The prince wished to hire a ship to take him to Tangiers, and showed his preference for an English ship that was in the harbour. But the vessel had a cargo and was due to leave for London. Baldwin felt it incumbent upon himself, in order to promote Anglo-Moroccan relations, to persuade the captain to divert his route and take the prince to his destination. He also arranged that the fare for the passage be paid in Tangiers. The Captain, Thomas Gooch of the "New Euphrates", was not particularly pleased with the arrangement, but agreed when the Consul promised to recommend him to Carmarthen.⁴

¹Baldwin did not mention that he had been called upon. It was Mure who reported it. AE, B_I, 114, Mure to Lucerne, April 1, 1788.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, April 2, 1788.

Baldwin was convinced that he had laid "... a foundation of advantage to the English interests in the Moroccan Empire".¹ He contented himself with the thoughts that Mulay Salami had been so pleased with him that he had claimed Britain and Morocco were "Ha'al Wahid".²

Another visiting dignitary that Baldwin interested himself with as a representative of Britain was Yūsif Pasha, the Grand Vezir, who visited Egypt on his way to Jedda in 1793. The Consul reported that he had paid his respects to the dignitary, and that their relationship had been very cordial. Yūsif Pasha had been particularly interested in news of the war in Europe, a topic Baldwin prided himself in knowing well.³

English travellers during the period were very restricted in number. One who went to Egypt, and had some contact with Baldwin, albeit remotely, was William George Browne. He was a young man, just down from Oxford, and had arrived in Egypt on 10 January 1792. He was essentially a scholar, intent on learning Arabic and the political conditions of the country. Baldwin recommended his care to Rosetti in Cairo, and did not mention him until he announced the

¹FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, April 2, 1788.

²Probably "Ahl Wāhid", or "one family".

³Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Nov. 9, 1793.

death of the scholar later the same year.¹ On 8 December, a short while later, Baldwin found out that the news of the death had been a mistake, and that someone else had been murdered in Browne's place.²

In October 1792, Baldwin announced the death, certain this time, of Richard Usgate, the British vice-consul at Acre. His position was inferior to that of the consul at Aleppo, but since the Levant Company had relinquished its post in that city³ Baldwin was quick to realize that there would be no one to succeed the vice-consul of Acre. He therefore took it upon himself as "... the nearest qualified person in His Majesty's service...", to appoint Luigi Malagumba who had served as Baldwin's secretary and chancellor, to succeed him.⁴ Baldwin claimed to be willing to give the position to someone else if Grenville wished him to do so, but hastened to add that it would be "... expedient to transfer the right of such appointment to the Consul of Egypt..."⁵ It is difficult to be certain that Baldwin did this merely to spite Ainslie, but the Ambassador's reaction was, naturally, that of great

¹ Exactly when Baldwin reported this cannot be ascertained, for his Dispatch No. 32 to Grenville, in which it is contained, is not to be found.

² Browne later published the events of his journey in Travels in Africa, Egypt, Syria.

³ The factory in Aleppo closed from 1791 to 1803.

⁴ FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Oct. 11, 1792.

⁵ Ibid.

anger at the presumption of his inferior.¹

In any assessment of Baldwin's consular activities, it would be necessary to decide whether he engaged in trade or any form of private business. His instructions explicitly forbade it, but given his past experience as a shrewd merchant, several accounts of his sumptuous way of living, and his comparatively low salary, it is not unlikely he did indulge in commerce. One proof of this may be seen in the case of the muslins he carried with him in 1786 to Egypt.² Another may be deduced from an incident recounted for totally different reasons by Magallon.

A French ship met with an English ship in the eastern part of the Mediterranean in April 1793. Since the two countries involved were at war, the French crew confiscated the goods of the English ship and took them to Alexandria.³ But the merchandise had been on its way to Egypt to be sold by Baldwin to the serdar of Alexandria, Sayyid Muhammad Kurayyim.

Baldwin was infuriated, and reported the piracy to Kurayyim who informed Magallon's dragoman that the French captain involved would be arrested for the death of the three members of the crew

¹It was Abbott, the (former) consul in Aleppo from 1770-1783, who informed Grenville of this. FO 78/17, Abbott to Grenville, 1796, n.d.

²See Chapter III, above.

³These included: 26 bales of cotton, and 2 ballots of tobacco. Corr. Cons., le Caire, 25, Magallon, June 28, 1793.

of the English ship that were from Alexandria. Magallon tried to point out to Kurayyim that since the goods had not been delivered, the latter should not be responsible for the loss; it was only Baldwin who should be concerned about that. He also told Kurayyim that the story of the death of the three men from Alexandria had probably been fabricated by the British Consul. When the Egyptian official remained adamant, Magallon complained to Muḥammad 'Izzat the Pasha, who issued a ferman showing his disposition to the French, and his anger with Kurayyim for persecuting them. This did not seem protection enough, for the French consul in Alexandria, Citoyen Attier, insisted on having the merchandise returned to Baldwin.

The French merchants of Alexandria lived in constant terror of Kurayyim.¹ He seemed to be a close friend of Baldwin, and always sided with him in any strife with Frenchmen.² Magallon gave an example of a dispute that once took place in 1792 between Baldwin and a French merchant; Kurayyim was so angry with the latter that he threatened to cut his head off.³

¹Magallon complained that Kurayyim: "... n'a cessé depuis qu'il est en place de nous inquieter..." Ibid.

²Kurayyim, one of Muḥammad Bey's closest supporters, continued to terrorize the French community of Alexandria, especially after he became Customs Master. When the French forces landed in Alexandria they seized Kurayyim and asked him to compensate for his previous extortions. He refused, was sent to Cairo, and sentenced to death. He died in September 1798. Jabartī, op.cit., vol. 3, pp. 62-3.

³Corr. Cons., le Caire, 25, Magallon, June 28, 1793.

This one incident implies at least two commercial transactions of Baldwin: one with Kurayyim, the other with the French merchant. Another business interest of Baldwin was one that he mentioned to the authorities in London; like his earlier desire to prove the importance of the Red Sea route to Britain, it was hidden behind the obvious aims of self-interest that no doubt made his plea less likely to be taken seriously.

In 1788 he reported that the French had started to export natron from Egypt.¹ It was a cheaper form of saltpetre that could be used to make soap, glass, bleach-linen and gunpowder, and was available, in great abundance, in the lakes of Wādī Nātrūn. From September to November 1788, Baldwin reported that the French had already exported 5,000 tons of the mineral to Marseilles.² This mention to London of the produce was noted, and a statement made to the Committee of Trade.

But Baldwin also asked for permission to export the mineral himself to London. When no definite answer came whether he was allowed to do so, he engaged Hunter, the owner of the British vessel, "Pollard", to see whether it could be effectively sold in England. But Hunter took a great deal of natron to England, and while there

¹ Baldwin actually claimed to have discovered it himself in 1776. He then had sent some of it to England for trial but he "... was ruined by as laudable an endeavour another way...", referring to the 1779 caravan disaster. FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Oct. 7, 1791.

² FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, Dec. 3, 1788.

tried to obtain governmental privilege to be the sole importer. Worried, Baldwin wrote to Carmarthen, asking him to intervene, and restating his own earlier application to import the mineral himself.¹

An examination of the imposition book of the Levant Company during this time shows that Hunter had started to export natron from Egypt as early as 1789; Richard and W. Lee, Baldwin's agents in London, on the other hand, also commissioned a good deal of the produce during the years 1790 to 1794.²

In 1789, Baldwin reported that France had already shipped eight million tons of natron that had supplied three hundred soap manufacturers in Marseilles, saving one-third of their oil consumption. Once again he urged Carmarthen to put his case before the Council for Trade, since the mineral imported into Britain would be of great national benefit.³

In 1790 and 1791, Baldwin began to load ships with natron and send them to England. In 1790, the "Ceres" carried a great deal of the mineral consigned to William and Richard Lee who were prepared, if necessary, to submit it to the government for inspection.⁴ In 1791, the "Rossetti" was sent out of Alexandria to

¹Ibid.

²SP 105/171, Impositions Book.

³FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, June 21, 1789.

⁴FO 24/1, Baldwin to Leeds, May 17, 1790.

England with the produce.¹

The appeals that Baldwin sent to London for a consideration of importing natron seemed to have received little response. In a detailed report on the trade with Egypt in 1790, the Privy Council mentioned flax, saffron, senna, and various drugs, but totally ignored the mineral Baldwin sought to promote.² It is interesting here to note that in this report on trade, no possibility whatsoever seemed to have been given to reviving the Red Sea commerce with India.

As Baldwin continued to export natron privately, with commissions to his agents Lee in London, he encountered great difficulties with the import duty in England, and he began to find it very expensive, often obtaining little profit from the transaction. In October 1791, he sent Edmund Tate of the "Levant" to London with much natron on board. He urged the government in London to overcome its reluctance, arguing that all new things are usually accepted with hesitance, despite enormous potential benefits. "In all experiments, my Lord, there are infinite difficulties to surmount..."³ Once again, he

¹FO 24/1, Baldwin to Leeds, March 21, 1791.

²B.T. 6/73, Reports of Lords of Comm. of Privy Council, Council to the Duke of Leeds, Oct. 17, 1790.

³FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Oct. 7, 1791.

seemed perplexed that his government should be so loathe to seize upon great commercial interest, but, characteristically, did not allow the fact that his ideas were being ignored dampen his enthusiasm for a venture he was firmly convinced of.

His wife had not been able to stand the weather of Alexandria, and so he sent her home to England in 1791. There she met with his agent, Richard Lee, to discuss the trade he had been carrying on. Lee sent Jane Baldwin a detailed list of the import duties he had had to pay for the natron, revealing the fact that these taxes amounted to considerably more than the Consul's annual salary.¹ But Baldwin did not seem to worry unduly about the taxation, for in a letter to Dundas he referred to his own unceasing attempts to promote Anglo-Egyptian trade. He reported the success of his efforts, and proudly pointed out that he could now contribute to the revenue of England, since the duty paid on the natron was higher than his salary as Consul-General.² He also claimed to have employed many ships to come to Alexandria.³

In 1788, when a Committee of the Privy Council was appointed to enquire about the slave trade, Carmarthen was asked by the Lords

¹ Egypt 5a, Lee to Mrs. Baldwin, Dec. 14, 1793. In this report, Lee stated that Baldwin had imported 183 tons in 1792, and 561 tons in 1793. The total duty paid for the two years was £1,486. 13s. Particulars on the duties paid ... on goods sent ... by George Baldwin Esq. from Alexandria in the course of nine months. Enclosed in Egypt 5a, Lee to Mrs. Baldwin, Dec. 14, 1793.

² Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas (copy), Nov. 9, 1793.

³ For a list of the ships that went to Alexandria during the years from 1786 to 1793, see Appendix VII.

of the Committee of Council for Trade for an account of that trade in Egypt. The Minister referred the request to Baldwin, instructing him to give an account of the caravans sent from Egypt to Africa, the trade of the continent and anything else that was pertinent.¹ This the Consul did in A Memorial Relating to the Trade in Slaves Carried on in Egypt.²

Baldwin's Relationship with British Officials: Ainslie, Dundas, and the Court of Directors

In formulating a general view of Baldwin's relationship with British officials, one has to take into account the great distance that separated Egypt from Constantinople and London, it may help to explain the divergence of opinion the Consul seemed to encounter so often. By far the most violent was that with Ainslie; it has already been mentioned how totally opposed in view the Ambassador and the Consul were. Baldwin's warmest relationship was with Dundas, who, greatly admiring his work, continued to give him his support, albeit somewhat indirectly.³ The most enigmatic of Baldwin's contacts was that with the East India Company; while it was pleased

¹FO 24/1, Carmarthen to Baldwin, Oct. 3, 1788.

²The Memorial was written on 21 June 1789, and later was incorporated in Political Recollections. See Appendix X.

³Dundas only wrote to Baldwin once; the Minister's friends conveyed to Baldwin his appreciation of his endeavours. The letter itself is not to be found today. In 1931, it was listed by Furber, Henry Dundas,

with the Consul's efforts, it maintained a steady attitude of indifference to remuneration, whether pecuniary or verbal.

Much has already been stated about the constant friction between Ainslie and Baldwin. Both men complained to London, but it was the Consul who summarised the situation in a few lines: "He treats me ... as if the cause we serve was not the same. Or as if he regarded my commission as not coming from the King. I have not deserved this contempt from the Ambassador."¹

Baldwin's relationship with Carmarthen is a difficult one to assess. At first, the Minister was obviously pleased with the Consul's endeavours to obtain a ferman from Hasan Pasha for the rights of English dispatches, as well as for his firm anti-French attitude. He graciously announced to the Consul that he had won "His Majesty's approbation".² At this, Baldwin was, of course, "... elated beyond expression..."³ He characteristically added: "Duty is anxious... until it is approved, but approbation makes us eager."⁴

First Viscount Melville, p.317, as being in the possession of the Viscountess Melville. In February 1968, the Viscountess claimed that she had sent it, along with many others of the Melville Papers, to the Scottish Record Office. The dispatch, however, is not to be found in the latter.

¹FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, Sept. 23, 1788.

²FO 24/1, Carmarthen to Baldwin, Feb. 1, 1788.

³FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, June 21, 1788.

⁴Ibid.

But a few months later, he began to clamour for permission to visit England in order to communicate his theories and ideas about the British rôle in Egypt.¹ This he did by asking Dundas to intercede with Carmarthen on his behalf. When no reply arrived, he was silent on the subject of a leave of absence for a year. In July 1789, he explained that his wife was not constitutionally able to withstand the weather of Egypt, and was impelled to leave the country. Baldwin then admitted that one of the reasons for his wanting to go to England was to be able to accompany her; another reason was his desire to secure for himself some kind of a home in England where he could retire to.² He himself had undergone a severe illness at the end of 1788 that took him to "the brink of the grave".³ With the outbreak of the plague in 1791, when he was confined to quarantine for ninety days, he once again pleaded with Dundas to obtain permission for him to go to some neighbouring island, explaining that the consulate at the time had no pressing work to be done.⁴ When Dundas did not answer, he wrote to Grenville⁵ asking

¹Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Sept. 23, 1788.

²Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, July 7, 1789. Mrs. Baldwin left in 1791, accompanied by her sister, Mrs. Montgomery.

³Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Feb. 23, 1789.

⁴Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, July 4, 1791.

⁵William Wyndham Grenville (1759-1834). In 1789, he was successively Speaker of the House of Commons and then Secretary of State for the Home Department. In 1791, he became Secretary of State for the Foreign Office, and remained in the office until 1801 when he resigned. He also held the position of President of the Board of Control from 1789-1793.

for leave to go to Cyprus.¹ He promised to appoint an agent to forward dispatches from Suez during his absence.²

Finally, in January 1792, Grenville granted him a leave of absence to go to Cyprus,³ but the permission arrived when the island was ravaged by the plague, and Baldwin was forced to remain in Alexandria. He wanted to make sure that he was only delaying his trip, for he told Grenville: "... I trust that Your Lordship will permit me to take it for a rule upon any similar emergency."⁴

A year later he pleaded with Grenville's secretary to intercede on his behalf to give him leave to return to England because of private reasons.⁵ His brother, James Baldwin, captain of the "General Cooke", one of the East India Company ships, had died. The inheritance of £25,000 was to be divided between Baldwin and his brother's orphans. The latter were anxious for their uncle to return home in order to help them.⁶ The Consul was also suffering once again from his badly-deteriorating health, and desperately

¹FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Oct. 7, 1791.

²FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Sept. 17, 1791.

³FO 24/1, Grenville to Baldwin, Jan. 3, 1792.

⁴FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, May 20, 1792.

⁵FO 24/1, Baldwin to Goddard, Nov. 9, 1793.

⁶Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Nov. 9, 1793.

needed a change of air after seven years' service in Egypt.

"For Gibraltar or any of the garrisons abroad are places of recreation and delights compared with Alexandria in the midst of a desert devoid of society or comfort of any kind."¹

He kept a respectful distance with both Carmarthen and Grenville in his letters, but with Dundas his tone was different. He was openly and sometimes exuberantly candid in his expression of admiration for the latter, and confessed: "I am a mere child in my affections... You are benevolence and sensibility."² He tried to flatter Dundas (and probably himself) when he received Carmarthen's letter of approval in 1788. He attributed the praise to Dundas, saying "I can trace in them, the liberal and vigorous spirit of my Patron".³ He added: "I am sensitive of your favour... Have I another friend besides?"⁴ Despite the fact that Dundas, whom he obviously considered his patron, had written him only once, the Consul claimed that his own "... affection and gratitude are the same".⁵

There is no doubt that the Minister was Baldwin's champion in London. He was far-reaching in his views of India, and for long

¹FO 24/1, Baldwin to Goddard, Nov. 9, 1793.

²Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, July 7, 1789.

³Ibid., June 21, 1788.

⁴Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Sept. 16, 1788.

⁵Ibid., Nov. 9, 1793.

remained alone in his stand that Egypt was of great importance to England for that reason. He had been introduced to Baldwin by Governor Johnstone¹ when he needed information about Egypt in 1785. Johnstone's family, including the Pulteneys,² had befriended Baldwin and his wife; they were also friends of Dundas. So there was a certain amount of mutual friendship, besides need, in the relationship.

The Consul's dealings with the East India Company during the years he served in Egypt gave the impression of being slightly chaotic. In 1786, the Company had employed Baldwin on the condition that after one year he would have concluded a commercial treaty with the Beys. In 1787, he asked for an extension of the time limit, since the situation in Egypt was not inducive to any negotiations.³

After his expedition of the triplicate message to India in 1788, he asked Carmarthen, and not the Court of Directors, for remuneration; the latter had ceased to communicate with him. He complained to Dundas: "I live in a state of absolute excommunication from all creatures and correspondence of the East India Company".⁴

¹See Chapter III, above.

²These included a certain Miss Pulteney, who was constantly mentioned in Baldwin's letters to Dundas as a particular friend of Jane Baldwin. She was probably the niece of Johnstone, daughter of Sir William Pulteney.

³Egypt 5a, Baldwin to the Court of Directors, July 2, 1787.

⁴Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, July 31, 1788.

The Company had stopped sending ships to and from India, and Baldwin turned to Dundas with apprehension. "... there is some mystery underneath which your authority and penetration must overcome."¹ Baldwin could find no reason for the Company's lack of interest in the very route it had tried to promote for its own good. The fact that Cornwallis, who was now Governor-General in India, agreed with the Consul that the route was an excellent one and should be exploited, did not seem to affect the Court of Directors in London.

Baldwin considered that, since he was waiting for a propitious moment to conclude the desired treaty with the Beys, he would still be considered an agent of the Company. But when he presented a bill for expenses in 1789, he was refused: "... the Committee having some doubt whether till then he can be considered duly authorized to draw for a continuation of his salary, and allowances, decline offering an opinion as to the acceptance of the following bill..."² Baldwin complained to Dundas, thinking that the reason his expense allowance was discontinued was due to the fact that he had lived in Alexandria, instead of Cairo, as he had been ordered to. He explained the importance of having to live in Alexandria, and to prove the hardship he endured there, he dramatically complained of the fact

¹ Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, June 21, 1788.

² Egypt 5a. At a Committee of Accounts, May 13, 1789. His expense allowance was £760. After 1789, this was cut out of his payment, and he received only the £500 per annum as salary.

that he had not eaten a piece of beef for four years.¹ Baldwin continued to draw bills on the Company, despite the earlier refusal to acknowledge them. When no answer appeared from London, he displayed his characteristic sense of the practical: "I have thought that what is unanswerable is granted."²

But he must have felt hesitant about it all the same. In April 1793, the "Drake" sloop arrived in Suez from Bombay with dispatches for London. Baldwin immediately sent a copy to London, and another by Tatar to Ainslie. He decided that even if the Company refused to pay for the expense, he would go ahead with it. With much bravado, he stated that he would "... take it upon myself ... to serve my country..."³

The French declaration of war on Britain had recently reached Baldwin's ears. He decided to send news of it as soon as possible to India. So, when the "Drake" returned to Bombay it carried with it Baldwin's message. Once again, as in 1778, the British in India had advance warning on European affairs, causing them to save their possessions in Pondicherry.⁴

¹ Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, March 14, 1790. He had not been in Egypt for four years yet, and it is not unlikely that he ate a great deal of mutton.

² Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Morton, Dec. 17, 1790.

³ Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Morton, April 10, 1793.

⁴ FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, April 10, 1793.

Baldwin's Dismissal

In early 1792, Grenville was beginning to question the utility of the Consulate in Egypt. He was worried that the £1,450 per year that Baldwin received far outweighed the services he rendered. He turned to Dundas for advice, asking him "...how far the interests of this country in its connexion with the East Indies are promoted by his being continued in Egypt..."¹ He also brought up the fact that if it needed Baldwin, the East India Company, and not the Civil List should be paying his salary.²

Dundas was well aware of the importance of having Baldwin continue in Egypt. In November 1790, Abercromby,³ was given a memorial by John Taylor⁴: Considerations on the Propriety and Practicability of sending dispatches from India by the way of Suez, and from England to this country by the same route.⁵ A year later, Taylor urged Dundas to consider the essay, adding "... I could not

¹ Egypt 5a, Grenville to Dundas, April 1, 1792.

² Fortesque Mss., vol. II, appendix V, Grenville to Dundas (copy), Jan. 25, 1793. £500 was paid by the Secret Service and £950 by the Treasury.

³ Sir Ralph Abercromby (1734-1801), the British soldier who, early in his career, had shown sympathy for the Americans in their struggle for independence. But, following the outbreak of the war in 1793, he was actively engaged in the fighting. In 1800, he was sent to Egypt. On 21 March 1801, after leading the forces for the landing at Abū Qīr, he was fatally wounded in a surprise attack by the French. He died seven days later.

⁴ See Chapter II, above.

⁵ Contained in Home Misc., 436.

help being astonished at the little attention paid to the navigation of the Arabian Gulph. And generally to the communication with England by the isthmus of Suez."¹ He was convinced that the only reason the route had fallen into disuse was "... interested motives ... and that private interest stands in competition with public good...."²

But Dundas was preoccupied with other matters, and did not seem able to find a suitable source of income for Baldwin, since both Grenville and the Court of Directors were unwilling to sponsor him. So just two months before Baldwin was to send his important dispatch on the "Drake" to Bombay, Grenville was writing a letter of dismissal.

"I am commanded by His Majesty to acquaint you that His Majesty has no further occasion for your services as Consul-General in Egypt. And I am further to inform you that it is His Majesty's pleasure that your allowance shall be continued till the first day of May next."³

¹Ibid., Taylor to Dundas, July 20, 1791.

²Ibid.

³FO 24/1, Grenville to Dundas, Feb. 8, 1793.

Chapter VTHE LAST, UNOFFICIAL YEARS 1793-1798, AND EPILOGUEMaintenance of the Consulate and Departure of Ainslie

Grenville's letter of dismissal, which should have reached Baldwin at the same time that he was sending news of the French declaration of war to India on the "Drake", somehow did not arrive in Egypt. The Consul had no way of knowing he had been relieved of his position until 10 March 1796, when a duplicate of the original dispatch arrived. Whether Baldwin really did not receive the 1793 dismissal cannot be ascertained; what is sure, however, is that he continued to act as consul until 1796, and did not finally leave Egypt until 1798¹, a few months before the French expedition.

The few extra years of his residence were fruitful, and ironically proved the value of official British representation. These years also marked the end of Ainslie's rôle as Ambassador, and the arrival of new and unprejudiced representatives in Constantinople. Ainslie asked for leave to return to England in 1793, and left in the early part of 1794. He was succeeded by Robert Liston who arrived in Constantinople in May 1794. Baldwin contacted him immediately, and sent him a flattering message asking for his help

¹Not in 1796 as Marlowe, Anglo-British Relations, p.12, claims.

in the transaction of a commercial treaty with the Beys. He tried to persuade Liston that his aid "... will make a principal figure among the objects of your first negotiation with the Porte".¹

The 1794 Agreement with the Beys

After remaining silent on the subject for a long while, Baldwin in 1794 announced the conclusion of a commercial agreement with Murād and Ibrāhīm. His secretary, Richard Willis, actually made the announcement, since Baldwin was suffering from eye-inflammation at the time. Very little is known of the negotiations that preceded the signing of the agreement. It has already been noted that an emulation of the Truguet agreements was one of the instructions given to the Consul in 1786; it has also been seen how the Ottoman expedition, the continued civil war and the plague were not conducive to any form of settlement with the ruling Beys. After the return to power of Murād and Ibrāhīm, Baldwin, who had earlier claimed to be in their confidence,² began to pave the way for the re-opening of the Red Sea trade to British merchants. The Consul must have felt extremely disappointed that he was too ill at the time to announce triumphantly yet another service for his country, but his relationship with Willis was cordial enough to

¹FO 78/15, Baldwin to Liston (extract), 1794, n.d.

²FO 24/1, Baldwin to Carmarthen, April 2, 1788.

accept a substitute.

Willis probably made Baldwin's acquaintance in Constantinople when the latter fled Egypt after the caravan disaster of 1779. Until then, Willis had been a close friend of Ainslie,¹ although the ledger books of the Levant Company indicate that he had also been Baldwin's business associate, and a highly-respected member of the community of English merchants in the city. During the months that Baldwin spent in Constantinople trying to obtain help for the recovery of his losses, he, very much to the anger and annoyance of the Ambassador, "seduced" the young Willis to his side. When Baldwin left the city, he made his new-found friend his agent, and even left the young Jane Baldwin in his charge. Very little is known of Willis in the ensuing years apart from the fact that he had a constant battle with Baldwin's creditors who pressed financial claims that could not be paid. In 1779, Willis himself was declared bankrupt. He continued to do business with Buccianti, Baldwin's agent in Alexandria, for the account book of the Levant Company shows that the arrival of a ship from Alexandria to Constantinople on April 1782 with a consignment for Willis from Buccianti.² He finally left the Ottoman Empire in 1783 and went to

¹He had arrived in Constantinople in 1774; in November of that year he was given the oath by John Murray. SP 105/186, Chancery Register, Nov. 22, 1774.

²SP 105/204, April 1782.

England. No mention is made of him after that apart from the fact that Ainslie, knowing Willis was in Vienna after Constantinople, wrote to his counterpart there; he asked Murray Keith to find out whether Willis was there to solicit Imperial help for the Red Sea project.¹

When Baldwin left England in 1786, it is significant that the Englishman he took with him to act as vice-consul was Thomas Turner, and not Willis. No mention whatsoever is made by Baldwin of Willis's arrival in Egypt. The first reference to him was with the announcement of the agreement with the Beys. Willis acted as the Consul's private secretary, and not in any official rôle. It may be safe to conjecture that somewhere around 1791 or 1792, when the older man's health began to fail, and his wife was obliged to leave because of her own ill-health, Baldwin sent after his old friend.

The announcement of the agreement was made to Grenville, to Dundas, to the Government of Bombay, to Robert Liston, and to the Court of Directors. To all but Grenville and the Ambassador in Constantinople, it must have come as a surprise. Liston had written to Grenville in 1794 saying that Baldwin had nearly finished concluding the agreement. He was finding it difficult to get the nec-

¹ Ainslie was worried about Baldwin's connection with Baron d'Herbert Rathkeal, and thought that Willis had been trying to enlist his aid. FO 261/4, Ainslie to Keith, April 2, 1782.

essary sanction from the Porte, and asked the Ambassador for advice. Liston, new to his post, told the Consul he would delay opinion on the matter for a while. Then, all of a sudden, he received, not a rough draft, but the copy of the concluded agreement. "The active zeal of this gentleman has however in a great measure precluded deliberation", he wrote to Grenville.¹ Liston was greatly embarrassed at the fait accompli and earnestly sought advice from London.

Baldwin had previously explained to Liston that the Beys were displeased with the arrival of dispatch boats to Suez, and showed their feeling by levying unfair taxes. When the Consul complained about the extortions, the Beys answered: 'What are these empty ships to us?'² Baldwin realized that they were eager to have merchandise, and so offered to sign an agreement.

The agreement was concluded on 22 Rajab 1208/28 February 1794. It had eighteen clauses, as did that of Truguet with Murād, and followed almost identically the text of the preceding French agreement.³ Britain had most-favoured nation status, and was offered help and security from the Beys for its Suez trade. The preamble acknowledged English capitulations, and the rights of the British to navi-

¹FO 78/16, Liston to Grenville, Jan. 24, 1795.

²FO 78/16, Baldwin to Liston (extract), Oct. 30, 1794.

³See Chapter II, above.

gate to all ports of the Ottoman Empire. Two significant differences with the Truguet agreement can be seen: first, Baldwin did not make any supplementary agreements with the Customs Master and a bedouin chieftain, and second, Baldwin did not actually sign the agreement, but instead was mentioned in the preamble:

In the name of God! Amen!

It being well known that the subjects of the King of Great Britain are authorised by sacred Capitulations, from the Sublime Porte, to navigate their ships to all -- and any of the ports in the Grand Signior's Dominions and for the Purposes of trafic to settle in all, or any of the Cities, or places of the Turkish Empire, as reference being had to the 1st, 2nd, 14th and 21st articles of the said capitulations more particularly set forth. And it being the desire of the English merchants to return to Suez with their ships and to carry on trade, as in the other parts of the Grand Signior's Dominions, provided the same security, & protection can be given to their persons and effects: and the said George Baldwin, settled in Egypt as Consul General, for the King of Great Britain having manifested this desire to the Beys in power:... They... considering the interest of the two nations to require a good understanding... and the said Consul General, giving assurance... that the same will be confirmed by a firman from the Sublime Porte... His Lordship Ibrahim Bey Shieck il Bellad in Cairo... and Murad Bey formerly Emir Hadje... on the one part & the most distinguished among his... Peers, George Baldwin Consul General for the King of Great Britain, on the other part, have voluntarily agreed: ...¹

For goods coming from India, the duties of 3⁰/o fixed according to capitulations were to be paid to the officers of the Pasha. An additional 6⁰/o was to be paid to the Beys, 3⁰/o by the English merchants, and 3⁰/o by the purchasers. It was most important to

¹ Egypt 5a. For a translation of the complete text, see Appendix VIII.

the Beys that a sizeable amount of goods should arrive regularly in order to make the whole project worthwhile.

Thus two items concerned with the agreement needed to be attended to immediately: the first was that ships should begin to arrive at Suez as soon as possible; the second regarded the stipulation that the agreement needed the sanction of the Porte in a ferman.

To make sure that the presidencies in India were aware of the need of the Beys to have merchant ships at Suez if the dispatch route were to continue, Baldwin sent Willis to Bombay to explain the situation personally. He told him to stress the fact that the Beys were anxious to have the trade resume as soon as possible. Willis was to remind the government of Bombay that the treaty would "... open new sources of prosperity to our possessions in India...", and would be "... an important vehicle of intelligence and correspondence between England and India".¹ But unfortunately, Willis never reached Bombay, for he died on the way there.²

Baldwin also sent similar pleas to the Court of Directors, but it seemed that no one was interested enough. In April 1795, "Panther", the East India Company cruiser, arrived at Suez. It carried dispatches for England, but the packet was stolen by Arabs

¹ Home Misc., 634, Baldwin to Pres. & Council of Bombay, July 24, 1794.

² FO 78/16, Liston to Grenville (cypher), June 16, 1795.

on the way to Alexandria, and one of the passengers was murdered.¹ The Beys showed no concern for the fate of packet boats, and did little to help, despite the earlier agreement with Baldwin. The Consul realized they wanted cargo, and desperately warned Dundas that if the trade did not begin soon "... this your fostered and profitable passage to India will be lost".²

The other important stipulation for the effectiveness of the agreement was the sanction of the Porte. For this, Baldwin needed the help of Liston in Constantinople. The Ambassador anxiously pored over the files of the Ainslie-Baldwin correspondence, trying to assess the relationship, and what his own rôle should be. He came to the conclusion that Ainslie had not been totally at fault. His 1786 instructions presupposed the Porte's sanction of a Treaty; Baldwin demanded it after the agreement had been signed. The predicament the Consul had placed him in was precarious, for the Porte remained adamant in its opposition to the Red Sea navigation.

Baldwin also urged Grenville to press claims for the Porte's sanction through Liston. It was necessary, he explained to the Minister, to "... shield the conscience of the Beys".³ He also

¹The packet was retrieved later.

²WO 1/344, Baldwin to Dundas (copy), April 17, 1795.

³FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Oct. 10, 1794.

clarified the situation further by stating that in Egypt "... we treat with a sort of double government seeming dependent, but independent in part".¹ But the reaction from London to the agreement and its possibilities was never to be expressed.² Since Baldwin was no longer a Consul as far as Grenville was concerned, he was uninterested in communicating with him.

Continued Consular Activity

Baldwin must have had some inkling of his dismissal before 1796, for he underwent much trouble with his salary after 1793. When Lee, his agent, went to Grenville's office to receive payment of his salary for 1792-1793, he was refused the money on the grounds that Baldwin's post was of "more charge than utility".³ But finally Lee received the salary. In early 1794 the agent went once again for the next annual payment. The secretary at Grenville's office said he could not make out the money order; it would have to wait for authorization from the Minister himself. Lee was assured the money would be paid, so he went repeatedly to the office, hoping each time to be rewarded. When Grenville did not send an authori-

¹FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Oct. 10, 1794.

²It is perhaps noteworthy that the French sources of the time make no mention of the signing of the agreement, although the March 1775 agreement had been copied and sent to France. AE, B_I, 335.

³FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Oct. 10, 1794.

zation, Lee wrote to him, and asked for Baldwin's salary.¹ In October 1795, Grenville wrote to Baldwin reminding him of his dismissal, enclosing a copy of the March 1793 dispatch, and promised him payment only for the year ending in June 1793.² Baldwin pleaded with Grenville that he had not received the earlier order of dismissal, and needed to be paid for his services up to and including 10 March 1796, when the duplicate arrived.³ When he received no answer, except for a supplementary payment in January 1797,⁴ Baldwin appealed to Dundas saying he would be in a "dreadful situation" if his bills were not paid.⁵

It has already been mentioned that Dundas was Baldwin's main champion in the government. The Consul's friends also pleaded with Dundas to help the unfortunate man in Egypt; William Pulteney asked his friend to intercede with Grenville for the continuance of the consulate in 1794.⁶ A few days later, Dundas wrote to Grenville, and stressed Baldwin's rôle in the winning of Pondicherry a second time, and admitted: "... I did feel a little awkwardness in the

¹FO 24/1, Lee to Grenville, March 16, 1795.

²FO 24/1, Grenville to Baldwin, Oct. 30, 1795.

³FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, March 29, 1796.

⁴FO 24/1, Receipt from Lee, Sept. 25, 1797.

⁵WO 1/344, Baldwin to Dundas (copy), April 17, 1795.

⁶Egypt 5a, Pulteney to Dundas, Aug. 1, 1794.

recollection that, about the same time of his doing that public service, he would receive his letter of dismissal".¹ As far as payment went, Dundas agreed that it was the responsibility of the Indian Treasury, "... for the poor man must not be allowed to fall between stools".²

How Baldwin managed to live without his salary is indeed perplexing. It has already been mentioned that he was engaged in some form of private trade. Also, his interest in the export of natron, and the shipments to his agents in London, indicate a certain amount of personal profit. There is, besides, some evidence that he participated in a commercial transaction with Jezzar Pasha of Acre. The Pasha applied to Baldwin for arms and ammunition to defend himself against the French whom he suspected of having designs on his territory. Baldwin obtained the goods for him through his agents in London. But Jezzar Pasha paid for them in products, and not money. The exact nature of the goods paid is not known; Baldwin mentioned, however, that Bonaparte, after entering Egypt, confiscated them and had them sold.³

¹ Fortesque MSS, vol. II, appendix V, Dundas to Grenville (copy), Aug. 17, 1794.

² Ibid.

³ Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Oct. 9, 1799. There is no indication as to the date of the commercial transaction.

Despite the lack of obvious financial resources, Baldwin managed to be very active during the five years when he was officially dismissed, and was able to do a number of services for his country. After the outbreak of war in 1793, the route to India via Suez was used considerably more often than in the previous years. On more than one occasion, the Consul was responsible for aiding the couriers from Suez to Alexandria on their way to England.

On 17 April 1794, shortly after the agreement with Murād and Ibrāhīm, the cruiser "Panther" arrived at Suez. It had come from Bombay, and carried dispatches for the Court of Directors in London. Baldwin helped with the carrying of the packet to Alexandria, and added a copy of his recently concluded commercial agreement to the letters.¹ The "Panther" remained in Egypt until August; it was on this ship that Willis made his ill-fated journey.²

There is a rather vague note in the French sources of two other British ships in Suez during the month of April 1794 that Baldwin did not mention. The first came from Bengal, and the second from Madras, the latter having a Minister on board.³

¹Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas (copy), April 28, 1794.

²Despite the fact that Willis's going on board the ship on 1 September 1794 was entered in the log-book, no mention of his death was consequently made. Add. Mss. 19290, "Voyage from Bombay to Suez", 1794.

³Corr. Pol., Turquie, 187. Vidal to Vidal, 2 floréal 2/21 April 1794. The writer of the dispatch was a partner in the Cairo firm of Autran, Vidal et Cie.

A year later, the "Panther" returned to Suez on 6 April 1795. The packets it was carrying were stolen.¹ The ship remained at Suez for a short time. In the meantime, Major MacDonald, who had previously acted as courier between India and England, arrived in Alexandria on 1 May. He told Baldwin that he was on official duty, a fact for which he had no proof, and could only rely on Baldwin's good faith. He also had no letters of credit, and asked the Consul for money. Baldwin decided to trust him implicitly. He helped him in his journey to Cairo, he introduced him to the captain of the "Panther", and gave him money.² The Consul also sent a message to India of the news of the recent subjugation of Holland to France.³

The real nature of Major MacDonald's business was entirely unknown to Baldwin. In 1791, after he passed through Egypt⁴ he had sent a long memorial to Dundas in which he promoted the idea of a British occupation of Egypt.⁵ He also wrote to Cornwallis who approved of another visit to Egypt.⁶ He therefore left Madras on

¹See above, p. 242.

²FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, May 12, 1795. Baldwin referred to it as "Public Money".

³WO 1/344, Baldwin to Dundas, May 12, 1795.

⁴See Chapter IV, above.

⁵Furber, op.cit., pp. 117-8.

⁶Add. Mss. 19289, "Voyage to the Red Sea", Sept. 1794.

9 February 1793 and arrived in Suez in April of the same year. From Suez he went to Cairo where he met with Rosetti who had received word from Baldwin to show him the text of the commercial agreement with Murād and Ibrāhīm. MacDonald refused to do so, and claimed: "...I was ... unwilling to interfere, having myself digested a plan which I proposed laying ... before the Beys".¹

His plan was to have a British settlement in Upper Egypt, and for this he needed to have an interview with Ibrāhīm Bey. Rosetti arranged for a meeting during which MacDonald had a "long and private audience".² Ibrāhīm, according to the Englishman, "... argued every point distinctly, and in a manner which convinced me he had paid serious attention to the proposal".³ But the Mamlūk asked that the proposal be kept secret from Murād "... until he could prepare him, fearing his vivacity and his bigotted zeal, for the Mahometan religion".⁴

The contents of the meeting were recorded by Rosetti at Ibrāhīm's request.⁵ In it, it was agreed that Ibrāhīm would authorize the establishment of an English factory at Qīna and Quṣayr for

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵For the complete text, see Appendix IX.

purposes of receiving and forwarding dispatches to India. It was also agreed that a direct trade between India and Egypt would be allowed, and that no import duties would be levied. The establishment would be granted the same privileges that the British resident at Basra enjoyed; these included immunity, the right of judging all those in his employ as well as all English persons, and the right to navigate on the Nile. The residents and agents would be allowed to have up to one hundred soldiers for their own security, provided they acknowledged the superiority and authority of the governing beys.

Ibrāhīm enquired as to whether this agreement meant an automatic cancellation of the previous one concluded with Baldwin. MacDonald could not go so far as to confirm it as such, since he needed the formal consent of London.

A year later, the "Swift" arrived at Suez on 16 April. It carried passengers who wanted to reach Europe in a great hurry. They asked Baldwin to hire two vessels; one party went in the direction of Xante or Trieste, the other to Malta or Leghorn. When he reported this to Dundas, Baldwin anxiously, yet not without emphasis, remarked: "I will not say, Sir - that you cannot do without me in Egypt - but you cannot do without a consul - And I may say - let him do as well as I have done."¹ Baldwin then asked the captain

¹FO 24/1, Baldwin to Dundas, April 21, 1796.

of the vessel to wait at Suez in order to carry news of the war in Europe to India. The captain agreed to wait, but only for ten days. But Baldwin was not ready in time, and the "Swift" had to leave. In the meantime, the Captain had had a difficult time at Suez because of the exorbitant demands of the authorities there. He left it all to be sorted out and paid by the Consul, who would in turn be reimbursed by the East India Company. But the Consul found this very trying, especially since his funds had been cut off from London, and the Company owed him a few thousand dollars for past services. "I have in my nature a kind of disregard for these things and would often prefer to bear an oppression myself than use arguments with my high-spirited countrymen..."¹

The Consul continued to warn London and Bombay that the Beys were increasingly furious at the lack of cargo on British ships, and would probably cease to allow any ship into Suez. The Pasha in Cairo had sent Baldwin a message saying he had complained to the Porte about the use of the Red Sea route by the British. Baldwin mentioned this to Dundas, and added "... as I did not buy off his indignation by a present, he will give colours to his complaint which may produce some effect".²

¹WO 1/344, Baldwin to Gov. Gen. of Bengal, May 15, 1796.

²Ibid.

In May 1796, Baldwin was to use the route once again for purposes of quick messages to India, and could proudly point out to yet another service for the benefit of his country. Mr. Wilkham, the British resident minister at Berne, wrote to Baldwin telling him that the Dutch squadron had left the Texel bound for the Cape of Good Hope. The letter was addressed to the British Consul in Egypt. Baldwin, who had by now received news of his dismissal, woefully remarked: "Although no more than the shadow of that exterminated being - I could not think myself dispensed with co-operating..."¹ He sent the information to India. The "Fly" cruiser was at Suez, so it carried the dispatch that also enclosed English newspapers that Baldwin had recently received from Leghorn. Baldwin decided that if the information proved useful "... England may have to owe another obligation to Mr. Dundas for persisting in fixing a watchhouse in Egypt - in a way - whose conquest and security rebrate on the vigilance of a good watch-man. He has had a faithful watchman and Mr. Dundas shall do him justice."²

When Baldwin's dispatch reached Bengal, a British squadron was sent to the Cape which captured the Dutch fleet. Once again, a major victory depended on the use of the route.³

¹WO 1/344, Baldwin to Dundas, May 18, 1796.

²Ibid.

³Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.29.

Thainville's Mission and Baldwin's Rôle

Watching the actions of the French, and reporting them to London had always been one of Baldwin's main preoccupations. With the exception of his attempts to thwart Thainville's mission, the last period of the Consul's stay in Egypt was noticeably free of interest in the French. The main reason for this was that after 1791, with the return of Murād and Ibrāhīm to power, the fortunes of the French community waned considerably.

When Ḥasan Pasha had been in Egypt, he "borrowed" a great deal of money from the French, most especially from Magallon, and never returned it. Two years later, the Frenchman went to France to secure some form of indemnity from the Government for his losses.¹ With Ismā'īl as shaykh al-balad, the French received much greater favour from his rule. Although he also borrowed money, he managed to return it.² He even petitioned Magallon - secretly, in his harīm, so no one would overhear - for French military aid to overcome the possibility of a return of the rebel Beys.³ After the death of Ismā'īl, the new rulers, rapacious to begin with, exerted unusual pressures on the French. From 1791-1798 the community lived

¹Clément, op.cit., p.278.

²Corr. Pol., Turquie, 179, Magallon to Lucerne (copy), March 6, 1789.

³He asked for engineers, artillery officers, ammunition-makers etc. Magallon was instructed to deal with the matter delicately, and not to promise anything to the Shaykh al-Balad. Corr. Pol., Turquie, 179, Projet de reponse à M. Magallon, May 1789.

in daily terror of the Beys, and suffered innumerable pecuniary damages. The French Revolution did nothing to make the situation more tolerable; it split the shaken community into two camps of royalists and republicans, each side distrustful of the other.

In 1793, Magallon who had always been Murād's friend, returned as Consul-General to Cairo. At first, he had enough money to keep the Beys happy, but when it began to run out, abuses were poured on the community. In 1795, there was a general French exodus from Cairo led by Magallon; the community felt more secure in Alexandria where they were relatively far from Murād and Ibrāhīm.¹ But from 1793, even Baldwin admitted that all commercial activities of both the French and the British were at a complete halt.²

In October 1795, Baldwin informed Grenville that Liston had written to him from Constantinople³ warning him of the forthcoming visit to Egypt of Dubois Thainville, the brother of Fouquier Thainville, the Public Prosecutor of France.⁴ The Ambassador had heard that the aim of the mission was primarily to negotiate with the Beys for a regular passage and trade of the Red Sea, "... in order to

¹Charles-Roux, op.cit., p.335.

²FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Nov. 9, 1793.

³The Ambassador must have known of Baldwin's dismissal.

⁴FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Oct. 3, 1795.

strengthen Tippoo, and finally to annihilate the British dominion in the East Indies..."¹ Baldwin was willing to act to thwart any success of the French, but reminded Grenville of two facts: "I have credit and argument enough with the Beys to stand against any argument or credit that Tinville may bring with him, excepting that forcible argument of cash...", because "... I am made impotent by the suspension of my bills at Your Lordship's office for three years salary..."² The other reminder concerned the disuse of the agreement of 1794: the Beys were angry, and if Thainville's mission was to be destroyed, British merchants had to start coming to Suez.³

The French archives show no evidence of Thainville's visit being what Liston suspected and Baldwin claimed it to be. The Frenchman's purpose seemed to be to help his countrymen in Egypt by putting pressure on the Beys, and if necessary, to threaten them with the Republic's recent conquests if they refused to return the money they had stolen.⁴

When Grenville did not answer his letter, Baldwin proceeded, not uncharacteristically, to act on his own to spoil Thainville's

¹Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.30.

²FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Oct. 3, 1795.

³FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Oct. 3, 1795.

⁴Corr. Pol., Turquie, 191. Instructions données par le citoyen Verinac envoyé extraordinaire de la republique française... au citoyen Thainville en l'envoyant auprès des Pacha et Beys d'Egypte. Thermidor 3/July-Aug. 1795.

visit. Alone in the country, cut off from any friends except for Rosetti, he had to cling to his convictions even more strongly than usual, and somehow had to act on them in order to prove himself. What he actually did is difficult to assess. He claimed that he counteracted the mission. "Tinville is known to have said, upon his return to Alexandria disappointed, 'Ils ne nous veulent pas de gré, ils nous aurons de force' 'Mais, comment ferez vous pour embarquer vos troupes sur la mer rouge?' 'Nous y transporterons de vaisseaux en charpente.' It appeared here, that the Republicans were bent at this time upon the invasion of Egypt."¹

From the French records, it may be possible to glean a little of what Baldwin probably did. To begin with, one of Thainville's first difficulties to surmount in Egypt was the disunity of the French community after the Revolution. Some of the men renounced their citizenship, and became either "Spanish" or "English".² Over those who defected to England, Baldwin had considerable influence, since he himself was violently anti-Republican.³ Thainville reported

¹Baldwin, Pol. Rec., pp. 29-30.

²Taitbout became "English" in 1794 (Corr. Pol., Turquie, 187) and Butet became "Spanish" in 1793. He had been Vice-Consul in Rosetta (Corr. Pol., Turquie 185). Rosetti was vice-consul for Spain.

³In 1794, when the new French flag was displayed in Alexandria over the home of the Consul, the Venetian and Ragusan consuls paid the usual compliment of displaying the flags of their own states. Those

from Alexandria that the merchants there were in violent opposition to each other, and it obviously was very difficult for him to present a concerted opinion of strength before the Beys.¹ Baldwin could have played a part in widening the differences of the French community, although there is no evidence to prove this.

Rosetti did do something that alienated Thainville from the Beys, however. He had read an article in an Italian journal which cited the list of presents recently given by the French to the Sultan in Constantinople. He translated the article, and showed it to Murād and Ibrāhīm who obviously compared it with the lesser riches Thainville had brought them; the comparison did little to promote goodwill from the Beys.²

It seems difficult now to believe that Thainville's mission failed because of Baldwin. The real reason for its failure was that the Beys gave him promises which they broke within a few months. That Baldwin and Rosetti helped to bring this about is not impossible,

who could even celebrated the occasion by cannon fire. Baldwin and the Dutch Consul stood together and questioned the validity and authenticity of the act. FO 78/15, Liston to Grenville, Sept. 25, 1794. Again, on March 10, 1794 when the anniversary of the massacre of Paris and the dethronement of Louis XVI was being celebrated, the Venetian Consul concurred by displaying his flag and firing the artillery. Baldwin complained bitterly to Richard Worsley, British ambassador in Venice. FO 24/1, Baldwin to Worsley, Aug. 27, 1794.

¹Corr. Pol., Turquie, 192, Aux Citoyens représentans du peuple, 15 frimaire 4/6 Dec. 1795.

²Ibid.

but a fair amount of the credit must be given to the rapacity of the Beys.

Hugh Cleghorn in Egypt

One of Baldwin's most important acts during his last five years in Egypt was his work in helping Cleghorn across the country in order to fulfil his mission that culminated in the British acquisition of Ceylon. Hugh Cleghorn, a professor of Civil History at St. Andrews University, became acquainted with the Swiss Count Charles de Meuron, owner and colonel of the Swiss regiment (supported by the Dutch East India Company), that made up the large part of the Dutch garrison of Ceylon.¹ After the establishment of the republic of Holland in 1793, and its alliance with France, Cleghorn put forward the idea to Dundas to take over the Swiss garrison for Britain, thus bringing the island under British domination in a relatively easy and bloodless manner.² Meuron had made it clear to Cleghorn that the transaction was possible. His brother, Count Pierre Frederic de Meuron, actually commanded the garrison, and could be counted on to transfer his loyalty to the King of England. Dundas gave the plan his complete approval, but warned of

¹Neil, Cleghorn Papers, p.3.

²Cleghorn's fear at the time, no doubt shared by Dundas, was that Ceylon would be used by the French as a base to support Tippoo Sultan.

its urgency. So on 1 March 1795, Cleghorn left England, went to Switzerland where he was joined by the Count Charles de Meuron, and with their party¹ went to Venice, and then sailed to Alexandria.

They arrived in Alexandria on 10 June 1795. Baldwin met them, and led them to his house where he lodged them for the night. The next day, he arranged for their departure to Cairo. While in Alexandria, Cleghorn noted that there were two ships from England in the harbour, and many from all over Europe. He also noticed that Baldwin received him and his party with the "utmost politeness and cordiality".² Cleghorn also gave some description of the kind of daily life Baldwin led; his house must have been spacious to lodge six extra people, and his table was "furnished with luxurious abundance".³ He told Baldwin of the urgency of his mission, and enquired about the Dutch Consul. Baldwin said that the Dutch Consul was expecting dispatches from Holland that had left on 1 April, and were to be sent out immediately to the East Indies via Suez. Cleghorn was worried that the Dutch government had discovered his purpose, so he asked Baldwin if he could find a solution. The Consul knew that his Dutch colleague was hostile to the new Republic, and, being in straitened financial conditions, could be bribed to

¹This was made up of: (a) Capt. Bolle, the aide-de-camp of Meuron, (b) M. Choppin, the Secretary of Meuron, (c) Michael Mirowsky, Cleghorn's servant, (d) Julius, a negro servant of the court. Neil, op.cit., p.46.

²WO 1/361, Cleghorn to Dundas (copy), June 10, 1795.

³Ibid.

deliver the dispatch to the English. If the Dutchman did not actually give Baldwin the letters, he could be induced to inform him as to their arrival, and they could be "stolen". Cleghorn, deciding that the papers were of sufficient importance, instructed Baldwin to obtain them, carefully adding that the courier could be "attacked", but not murdered.¹ He authorised the Consul to draw £300 for the procedure.

Cleghorn then went to Rosetta where he arrived on 12 June. There he learned of the existence of a Mrs. Warschi "who calls herself an Englishwoman", and went to see her. She was an old lady, but a very pleasant person, and claimed to be the sister of Mrs. Wortley Montagu.²

On 17 June, Cleghorn reached Cairo. Baldwin had already offered him Rosetti's services in the city, but had cautioned that there was the suspicion that the Venetian merchant was in league with France. Rosetti remained with the Englishman and his party during the whole of their stay, although he did not lodge them at his own house. The first evening there, Rosetti invited them home for dinner, and after that, took them to Mr. Elias, Baldwin's dragoman, who lived in the Consul's house where they were to stay. Rosetti and Elias were con-

¹Ibid.

²She was the sister-in-law of Edward Wortley Montague (1713-76) an Arabic scholar, and son of the famous Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Mrs. Warschi was an Irish widow, the daughter of Dormer (a merchant of Leghorn), and had lived in Egypt for twenty-two years. Her husband

stantly helping them, as was Marquetti Caravigio, an Italian from Smyrna.

Cleghorn liked Rosetti very much. The Venetian told him that it was he who had obtained the 1794 agreement with Murād and Ibrāhīm; he claimed to have acted on a commission from Baldwin.¹ Rosetti, together with Baldwin, convinced Cleghorn of the importance of the overland route through Egypt, and the significance of having British cargo ships at Suez. Cleghorn told Dundas of this, and added that Rosetti should share more of the honours of the work of the British in Egypt, since he lived in Cairo. He described him to Dundas as a "zealous friend to the English nation".²

When Cleghorn left Cairo for Suez, Rosetti sent two of his men to help him. He also applied to the Pasha³ for letters of commendation to Jedda, and personally wrote letters to residents and merchants there to help Cleghorn. He did not forget to send a letter to the agent of the East India Company at Mukhā to furnish Cleghorn with a ship when he arrived.

In Suez, the party lodged at Elias's private dwelling. They had been detained in Cairo because Ibrāhīm Bey had wanted to send a

had been French; her son was, at the time of Cleghorn's visit, a prominent merchant of Rosetta. Anon., A non-military journal, or observations made in Egypt by an Officer upon the Staff of the British Army, p.8.

¹This is not unlikely although Baldwin never mentioned it.

²WO 1/361, Cleghorn to Dundas, June 25, 1795.

³Salih, who had replaced Muḥammad 'Izzat in 1794.

courier to Mecca by the same caravan.¹ But Rosetti had seen to it that they had letters from Murad Bey to Muhammad Agha, the governor of Suez, so their stay there was not unpleasant. Muhammad sent them a present of sheep and fowl.²

They finally left Suez on 9 July for Jedda,³ and from there went to Mukhā where they arrived on 18 August. After a very rough crossing, they reached Tellicherry; there they heard that a British force had already gone to Ceylon, and open warfare was consequently imminent. Cleghorn immediately sailed to the island and informed the British regiment of the impending agreement with the Swiss garrison. When Meuron's forces withdrew their support of the existing government in November, the governor of the island put up a gallant but futile show of resistance, but there was little bloodshed to speak of. Ceylon finally surrendered on 16 February 1796.

The quick and agile manner in which the island was acquired for Britain was largely due to Cleghorn, but it must not be overlooked that Baldwin's aid, for use of the overland route and for the waylaying of the Dutch message, was valuable. On his way back from

¹WO 1/361, Cleghorn to Dundas, July 3, 1795.

²Neil, op.cit., p.76.

³WO 1/344, Baldwin to Dundas, July 24, 1795.

Ceylon, Cleghorn also went through Egypt. He arrived in Suez on 15 April 1796,¹ and found that Rosetti had sent horses, camels and a suitable escort to take him to Cairo and Alexandria. Baldwin helped to arrange for a passage to Europe.²

Carlo Rosetti

One of the most fascinating, yet enigmatic, characters in the story of the British in Egypt during the period under study was Carlo Rosetti. He had lived for a long time in Egypt, and at one time was the trusted adviser of both 'Alī Bey and Muḥammad Bey Abu'l Dhahab. He continued to influence the Mamlūks after 1795, although he did not carry the same prestige as with the other Beys. As a Venetian merchant, he was interested in the Red Sea trade, and his rôle in thwarting Baldwin's plans for it in 1779 has already been mentioned. He had very little national loyalty, and served whatever state could be of use to him. Still, his commercial interests must have declined a great deal for him to have to resort to becoming an ally of Baldwin when the latter became consul-general. But he helped a great deal, and managed to incite the French community to hate and fear.

¹Neil, op.cit., p.285.

²Ibid., p.286.

From 1795 onwards, he began to be noted in London. Cleghorn did much to change the shady picture previously drawn of him by Baldwin: "... I could not entertain a doubt that the character given me of Mr. Rosetti proceeded upon mistaken apprehensions of his political principles."¹ At the time of Cleghorn's visit Rosetti was consul concurrently of Austrian and Russia, and chargé d'affaires for Spain. Yet he wished to be recommended to Dundas, which Cleghorn obligingly did; he told the Minister that Rosetti "... would be highly gratified if you would have the goodness to communicate to the Imperial Minister at London the zeal with which the Consul at Cairo forwards the views of as such as carrying publick dispatches to India".² He also claimed that Rosetti's personal influence with the Beys had been invaluable to him during his journey through Egypt.

Rosetti had also suggested to Cleghorn a method whereby England could win Murād's favour. One of the Bey's ships that carried grain from Alexandria and was managed by Greek sailors, had recently been seized by a Maltese pirate. If England could arrange to have the ship returned to the Mamlik, it would win the gratitude of the ruler. Rosetti suggested that Cleghorn should write to the British Consul at Malta.³ But Cleghorn knew William Hamilton, the ambassador

¹Neil, op.cit., p.70.

²WO 1/361, Cleghorn to Dundas, June 25, 1795.

³Ibid.

in Naples, and instead wrote to him.¹

Cleghorn also received suggestions from Rosetti as to what gifts from Britain would be suitable for Murād and Ibrāhīm, in order to secure friendly Anglo-Egyptian relations: pistols and guns with plain designs in order to differ from those of the French. "But the most agreeable present to Mourad Bey would be an elegant pleasure boat, with a room for his ladies, ornamented with mirrors, having Venetian blinds and covered with damask. He has built a 60 gun ship for the idle parade of the Nile and perhaps some English naval stores might be highly valued."²

When Cleghorn was in Suez waiting to leave for Jedda, he wrote to Rosetti in very warm tones. "I shall never be able to discharge the debt of gratitude which I owe you..."³ He accepted the fact that the Venetian had "more or less" admitted to being in secret correspondence with members of the Convention, but was personally opposed to the violence of the Revolution.⁴

It has already been established that Rosetti shared Baldwin's commercial interests, the best example being the rivalry

¹ Cleghorn to Hamilton, June 26, 1795. Contained in Neil, op.cit., pp. 67-8.

² WO 1/361, Cleghorn to Dundas, June 25, 1795.

³ Cleghorn to Rosetti, July 6, 1795. Contained in Neil, op.cit., pp. 83-4.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 69-70.

in 1779 that ended with the Englishman's abandonment of the Red Sea trade. Baldwin's interest in the export of natron has already been mentioned.¹ Rosetti also had an interest in this trade, for he told Cleghorn of it, and said he had already in farm a large district on the banks of the Nile where the mineral was to be found.² Rosetti also assured Cleghorn that he would be willing to supply England with a great supply of natron, and would be able to obtain a monopoly on its export from the Beys.³ He joined Baldwin in expressing the importance of depriving France of this product.

Another branch of trade that interested both Baldwin and Rosetti was the export of wheat from Egypt. In March 1796, Baldwin, in one of his last desperate efforts to prove the value of his defunct office, told Grenville that there was a surplus of wheat in Egypt. He knew that England was suffering from a great shortage of the cereal, especially when it came to supplying the forces in the Mediterranean, and as Consul-General, he was willing to supply his country with all it needed. In June 1795, he had asked Lee, his agent, to contact the Privy Council with the suggestion. Baldwin argued that if he had been able to send wheat from Egypt in 1795, the government would have saved £1 million.⁴

¹See Chapter IV, above.

²Rosetti had also been given a monopoly in the trade of senna by Murād. Description l'Égypte, vol. 17, p.331.

³WO 1/361, Cleghorn to Dundas, June 25, 1795.

⁴FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, March 29, 1796.

In 1796, the harvest in Egypt was excellent, and Baldwin was anxious to prevent the French from obtaining it.¹ He suggested that a ferman from the Porte allowing the export of wheat could be obtained in return for a promise to pay in bullion.² The enterprising Consul already could name a correspondent in London, John Barker, who could act on his behalf for the commission.

Rosetti was plainly interested in the export of wheat to England as well, for Cleghorn mentioned the abundance of the product more than once in his letters. Since he spent a great deal of time with the Venetian merchant, it may be deduced that it was from him that he obtained his interest and information. Baldwin and Rosetti's interest in the trade came to nothing, despite the fact that the suggestions were taken into consideration. In January 1796, the Privy Council decided that it would not be expedient to send the grain from Egypt to the fleet and garrison at Gibraltar, since there were no means there to grind and dress wheat or barley.³

¹According to Baldwin, Thainville had "inundated" Egypt with French money, in order to buy the surplus wheat. Ibid. France did, indeed, import wheat from Egypt at this time. Description de l'Egypte, vol. 12, p.148.

²The government in England would also have to send many presents for the Beys that should include "... several sets of firearms, ... of guns, pistols and carbines. No yellow metal about them of plain and good workmanship besides a dozen of brass field pieces, not weighing more than four cwt. each to the amount in all of five thousand pounds." Ibid. FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, March 29, 1796.

³T. 1/759, January 16, 1796, and T. 1/760, January 29, 1790.

When Baldwin received the duplicate of the original letter of dismissal in March 1796, Rosetti lost no time in contacting the East India Company and offering his services as agent. He also took it upon himself to act for the British in Cairo. In August 1796 he wrote to the Secretary of the Secret Committee in London to tell him of two recent services he had provided for Englishmen in Egypt. The first was to William George Browne¹ who had been travelling in Upper Egypt when he was robbed. Rosetti immediately obtained the help of 'Uthmān Bey, the governor of Upper Egypt.² The second was to Samuel Johnston and William L. Gardner who had arrived in Cairo on 22 July 1796 with dispatches for India. Rosetti took them to Suez, and from there hired a boat to take them to Jedda.³

In June 1796 he wrote to Sir John Shore⁴ saying he had served the Company for fifteen years. He untruthfully claimed to have cooperated with the British to have the Red Sea trade developed, and added an account of his rôle in the signing of the 1794 trade agreement. At the time of writing, he was arranging for Captain

¹See Chapter IV, above.

²Egypt 5a, Rosetti to W. Ramsay, Aug. 6, 1796.

³Ibid.

⁴Sir John Shore, 1st Baron Teignmouth (1751-1834), Governor-General of India from 1793 to 1798.

George Downie to take a dispatch to India.¹ Four days later, he wrote to say that Downie had been delayed because the Arabs of Yenbo had seized on a well-loaded boat from Jedda, and the Beys in Cairo had consequently forbidden boats to go to Jedda. But Rosetti managed to get special permission for the Englishman to go through the Red Sea, but only after great difficulty. He urged the East India Company to send commercial boats to Suez in order to facilitate the journey for dispatches.

Rosetti seemed to have more luck than either Hughes or Baldwin in winning the recognition of the Company. Shore concurred with Rosetti's reminder that the Red Sea trade should be opened, and at the same time promised to send Rosetti's letters to the Court of Directors in London, so that consideration of his help would be noted.²

In May 1797 Rosetti wrote to the secretary of the Secret Committee once again. He had received a letter from Captain Speak of the "Panther", saying he was on his way to Suez from Bombay. Rosetti gave the message to Murād and Ibrāhīm, and was able to obtain letters of recommendation.³ A month later, he received the dispatches and

¹Egypt 5a, Extract of Bengal Pol. Consultations.

²Egypt 5a, Extract of Bengal Pol. Consultations, Oct. 24, 1796.

³Egypt 5a, Rosetti to Ramsay, May 10, 1797.

sent them to Baldwin who in turn forwarded them to London.¹

The next year, dispatches arrived on the "Intrepid". Once again, Rosetti helped in expediting them on the overland route, told London of his efforts, and added the usual plea for cargo at Suez. He promised in the meantime to keep the Beys happy with presents, and urged for suitable gifts to be sent.²

Baldwin had left in March of that year, and Rosetti was anxious not only to be remunerated for his own services, but also to inherit the Englishman's position as Consul-General. He argued that at any rate he was doing the work.³ His argument also extended to sending a copy of Baldwin's confirmation of Rosetti as his deputy on 3 March 1796.⁴ Most of all, of course, he wished for Baldwin's salary from the Company. He never received an answer.

Baldwin's Departure and Proud Return

When the shock of dismissal hit home, Baldwin appealingly wrote to Dundas: "Conceive, sir, what ruin for a man who has never thought of providing for the infirmities of old age, but has placed his dependence upon his zeal, and activity, and on the certain favour

¹Egypt 5a, Rosetti to Ramsay, June 12, 1797.

²Egypt 5a, Rosetti to Ramsay, Aug. 25, 1798.

³Egypt 5a, Rosetti to Ramsay, May 12, 1798.

⁴Egypt 5a, Rosetti to Ramsay, March 23, 1798.

and protection of government..."¹ He could not conceive of the destruction of the chancery of the consulate, or of the possible confiscation by France. "It is the creature of the India Board - the creature of Mr. Dundas ... Take it therefore to your own office, sir, and free it from ruin."²

His health had seriously deteriorated. "My whole ambition is to return to a cottage in England, and to finish in quiet."³ When no response appeared from London, his spirits became very low as he finally began to realize he would have to leave. He was far too depressed to be concerned about his personal wealth, and how he would live in England without any form of income. He simply left all his property behind⁴ and on 14 March 1798, sailed from Alexandria. Five days later, he arrived on the island of Patmos.⁵ From Patmos he went to Chismé where he remained for twenty-five days.

It was as a sick, ageing and disillusioned man that he wrote to Dundas from there. "I have been forced by the effects of two

¹FO 24/1, Baldwin to Dundas (copy), March 29, 1786.

²Ibid.

³FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, March 29, 1786.

⁴He described this as: "My plate, and furniture, and a sum of money advanced on the security of my dwelling house; making together a sum of £2000 ..." Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Oct. 9, 1799.

⁵Baldwin, Pol. Rec., pp. 31-2.

years constant illness to resign my employment and to leave Egypt for a chance of recovering my health in a better air, but I do not hope even to be ever able to undertake any publick service again."¹ From Chismé he went to Trieste where he heard of the Napoleonic invasion of 1 July. He claimed that when Nelson's fleet had gone to Alexandria in June in search of the French, the British admiral, "... not finding me at my post, was compelled to quit the coast".² He had been planning to continue his weary journey to England, but when he learned of the confiscation of all his belongings in Egypt by the French, he realized this would have been impossible. He decided instead to "retire from society into a corner of Italy, and to wait for a turn in the tide of affairs".³ On his way there he stopped in Vienna where he wrote to Dundas stating his case once again, and asking for enough money to live on for three years. "I ask it for other purposes to vindicate the past, I ask it with a view to the means of arranging a work already in my possession, requiring care, which shall do honour to your friendship for me..."⁴

¹WO 1/344, Baldwin to Dundas, April 23, 1798.

²Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.32. The letters brought by the British fleet were delivered to Rosetti. FO 78/19, Smith to Grenville, July 25, 1798.

³Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.34.

⁴Egypt 5a, Baldwin to Dundas, Oct. 9, 1799. The work was presumably Political Recollections.

He finally reached Tuscany where he settled down in an elegantly furnished palace not far from Florence that cost him only £20 a year for rent.¹ "I could be resigned to this fate, since the owner of the palace had to resign himself to worse. I clothed myself, amid this splendour, in perfect humility: I would have clothed myself in peace, but the din of war was all around me."²

When he heard about the battle of Marengo³ he was very disturbed, and decided to leave at once. He sought refuge in a place not far from Leghorn. Soon after his arrival, a party of Republicans reached the city, and Baldwin once again fled, this time to the British frigate "Santa Dorothea" which was crowded with fugitives; he had at the time ".... little more than a change of linen..." in his pocket.⁴

The "Santa Dorothea" cruised in the Mediterranean for a fortnight, and then landed at Naples. Baldwin disembarked, and began to plan for a visit to Malta, where he knew the British forces would

¹Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.35.

²Ibid., p.36.

³14 June 1800. Napoleon's great victory over the Austrians in Italy.

⁴Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.37.

be, in order to offer his services in the case of an expedition to Egypt. Instead, he received letters from the Commanders-in-Chief of the army and navy. Admiral Keith's¹ letter was from Port Mahon, written on 18 November 1800. He was asked to join them at Malta, since they were going to Egypt, and needed his valuable knowledge of the country. Baldwin's instant reaction reveals his enthusiasm: "Shall I make a merit of my readiness to embark upon such an invitation? or shall I not rather say - What answer could an honest Englishman, and a faithful subject, make to so honourable a call - to so honourable a distinction - but, command! I will shew the way!"²

On 9 December, he embarked on H.M. frigate "Greyhound" under the command of Captain Ogle,³ and arrived in Malta ten days later. The next day a captured polacca from Alexandria was brought in. Two of the prisoners were Tallien⁴ and Magallon. Baldwin knew that it was the latter who had seized his property after the arrival of Bonaparte in Egypt, although he had been given the choice of deciding

¹G. K. Keith Elphinstone (1746-1823), the British admiral who had been sent to occupy the Dutch colonies in the Cape of Good Hope and India, 1795 to 1796. In November 1799 he was named Commander-in-Chief of the forces in the Mediterranean.

²Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.39.

³He was later to die at Abū Qīr.

⁴Jean Lambert Tallien (1767-1820), a French revolutionary who accompanied Bonaparte to Egypt where he edited the Décade Égyptienne. It was Menon who made him leave the country, after which his boat was captured by the British. He was sent to London where he remained till 1802.

what to do with it. He was reported to have said: "La France est faite pour conquerir, et non pas pour faire des compliments."¹

But now that he was a prisoner, Magallon asked to see his former colleague. Baldwin reported the conversation:

"J'y viens et vous y allez", he said.

"Oui, s'il plait à Dieu, nous y irons."

"Vous y trouverez de vos effets."

"Quels effets?" said I.

"Vos livres."

"Bon!", said I, "mes livres! et le reste?"

"Ah! pour le reste", said he, "J'en suis fâché!"

"Vous n'avez jamais manqué de rien, j'espère?" said he.

I answered him, not caring to reproach him in that situation, "la Fortune ne m'a jamais affectée. Je croyois seulement qu'on respectoit, par une loi constitutionnelle, les effets d'un diplomate!"

Tallien ... said, "Il est vrai; mais vous allez vous-même vous dedommager."

"Et dans le cas que je ne me dedommage pas," said I, "le Consul Bonaparte n'auroit point égard à la loi?"

"Monsieur," said he, "dans ce cas-là, je vais eu France, je pourrois y conter pour quelque chose; rappelez-vous de moi, je suis Tallien; vous avez entendu de moi?"

¹Baldwin to Dundas, Dec. 9, 1800. Contained in Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p. 58.

And I said, "Certainement, je vous connois de nom. Je n'oublierai pas au moins votre offre."

"Je suis homme d'honneur, Monsieur," said he.

And so we parted.¹

On 21 December, the British party and Baldwin sailed for Mamorice. Baldwin stayed with Lord Keith on board the "Foudroyant", despite Abercromby's suggestion that the Consul should remain with him. On 28 December, they reached Mamorice. During the voyage, Baldwin did all he could to inform Abercromby about Egypt. On 23 February, after having completed the necessary preparations, the fleet sailed for Egypt, and reached Abū Qīr on 2 March.

Although Baldwin was there during the beginning of the expedition, there is little evidence that he was engaged in anything specific, other than being the expert on Egypt. His own recollections of the landing at Abū Qīr are filled with great poetic outbursts of nationalistic expressions² rather than details of the manoeuvres. He must have shared the life of the invading forces for Keith told him: "Baldwin, you will live with us a soldier's life: but shall fare all alike."³

¹ Ibid., pp. 58-60.

² "Ah! but ambition must have bounds! If ambition were to have no bounds, ambition would overawe the world! Then who shall check ambition, but the sons of freedom? But who shall be worthy of freedom, but the virtuous? But who shall spurn at the impertinence of Gallic pride, but Englishmen? Then come on! - To work!" Baldwin to John Baldwin, May 19, 1801. Contained in Baldwin, Pol. Rec., pp. 102-3.

³ Ibid., p. 116.

When the forces set up camp outside Alexandria, Baldwin invited unnamed Arab chiefs to see him. From them, he gathered information about the present state of Egypt. They also promised to help with provisions, cattle and horses. Abercromby charged Baldwin with the organization of supplying the soldiers with their needs. The former consul could proudly say later: "I put things into a good train... The General has said sometimes to the general officers about him: 'The army, Gentlemen, are greatly indebted to Mr. Baldwin.'"¹

Baldwin did not remain for long in Alexandria. He was back in England in May, having proudly brought back with him the standard of the Invincible Legion of Bonaparte which the British had captured on 21 March. "We gained our trophy, and ever an honourable trophy it will be to England, since it is the achievement of greater achievement, since it was won from the bravest warriors of the time."²

x x x x x x

Little is known of Baldwin's life in England after May 1801. He died in London in 1824.

¹ Ibid., p.124. Baldwin was full of admiration for Abercromby, and when the latter was wounded, he said: "I sat down on the sand to bewail our misfortune." Ibid., p.134.

² Ibid., p.145.

A P P E N D I X

Appendix I

Translation of a representation from the Ottoman
Porte to his Britanick Majesty's Ambassador.

It is certain that his Majesty the King of Great Britain as an ancient, and sincere Friend of the Ottoman Porte, can never approve of any circumstances, which may alter the ancient order of the State-affairs of this Empire; nor of those particularly, which might give rise to a reciprocal coolness. - His Britanick Majesty's mercantile Ships, as well as those of the other Christian Powers, who are in friendship with the Sublime Porte, have never hitherto passed beyond the Port of Gedda, nor is there an instance of their having penetrated as far as into the Scale of Suez. - As the illustrious Towns of Mecca, and Medina are situated nigh the eastern-Coast of the Bay of Suez, all the Mahomettan Nations, and in particular the Ottoman Court look upon all that Shore as sacred. Besides this, there are upwards of hundred thousand Men of the Tribe of Urian, who inhabit all along the Eastern-Coast of the Sea of Suez and who (as it several times has happened) upon the occasion of a Shipwreck, or other distressful accident of some Mahomettan Vessel, have attacked her, ransacked the Cargo, and slaughtered the Captain, and Crew: and as these People have no settled abode, they fly away into the Deserts, and thus are out of the reach of pursuit, and punishment. In the Year 1189 it was represented from Cairo that a small British Vessel was come, contrary to custom, to the Scale of Suez: on this intelligence it was notified to the Predecessor of the said Ambassador to inform his Court that the Sublime Porte could not for many reasons, admit of such Ships going into the Porte of Suez, and it was likewise recommended to him as also to the other European Ministers to forbid their respective vessels from going into the said Port: with which they have promised to acquaint their respective Courts, declaring further that none of their Ships, for the future, should go thither. Nevertheless this year in the moon of Safar the aforesaid Ambassador sent a representation to the Sublime Porte through his First Dragoman, containing an account that there was arrived from the East-Indias a small British Ship of War, at the Scale of Suez where she had landed three British Gentlemen who had met with a very unfriendly treatment from the Principal People of Cairo. On this account the said Dragoman was put in mind that the Sublime Porte had disapproved of the Christian Ship's going into the said Scale, as also of the anterior declarations she had made upon the subject. But although that British ship's coming thither was irregular, yet out of regard for friendship, an Imperial Command was issued, and sent thither by a Person dispatched on purpose, in order that the Persons who had

abused the aforesaid British Gentlemen should be punished: but it was added, likewise, that no Christian Vessels should be thenceforth allowed to go to Suez: that on their coming thither, they should be obliged to return back to Gedda and that on the contrary, every mark of protection should be shown to all the British Merchants; and Subjects that happened to go to Damiata, Rosetta, Alexandria, and Cairo: with which determination said Ambassador was desired to acquaint his Court.

Now the Governor of Cairo Izzet Mehemmed Pashaw has represented that there are three British Ships come lately to the Scale of Suez, and that on his mentioning to a certain Merchant Baldwin, the Sublime Porte's objection to it, the said Baldwin answered that these Vessels were come to the said Scale, because their Principals in India had not received any orders from their Court relative to this Inhibition; and that notwithstanding he / the said Pashaw / out of regards to friendship, has permitted the aforesaid British Ships to unload at two other neighbouring Scales Tor, and Cassir, and their Cargo also to be transported to Cairo; adding farther that the successive arrival of these Ships to the said Port gave room to discourse in all those places.

The aforesaid Ambassador our Friend is sensible that as it is now a year, and half since the Sublime Porte's determination upon this subject was imparted to his Predecessor, the orders of his Court ought by this time to be arrived at those parts.

Though the concourse of Christian Vessels at the Scale of Suez may, among the Inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire, give rise to innovations which might destroy the good rules of this State, it is evident besides, that it will prove prejudicial to the Revenues of the Custom-House at Gedda, upon which depends the maintenance of the Inhabitants of the two illustrious Towns Mecca and Medina. It is equally obvious that in case any British Vessel happens to be Shipwrecked in those parts, and the abovementioned Urians should ransack the Cargo, and murder the Captain and Crew; the said Ambassador, or his Successors, laying stress upon the articles of the sacred capitulations, would insist upon the offender's being punished. Besides this consideration, as the two illustrious Towns of Mecca, and Medina are the object of the Ottoman's devotion, and the Basis of the Mahomettan Religion, and as the Sea of Suez offers a nigh access to those sacred Places; the unusual concourse of Christian Vessels thither, will be a matter of displeasure to all the Lawyers, and to the Clergy in Egypt, Higias and Arabia; and consequently the Sublime Porte is under an indispensable obligation to prevent it.

Wherefore the Sublime Porte desires the aforesaid Ambassador, our Friend, to take into serious consideration the reasons alledged in this friendly representation; to write to his Court with earnestness upon this particular, and to employ his diligence in preserving the constant friendship of these two Courts, on that footing upon which it has hitherto existed: and he is equally desired to notify to the Sublime Porte the answer that he will have from his Court.

Received the 5th of May. 1777.

Appendix II

Translation of a Hatty Sheriff, or Imperial (Sign Manual) Command,
addressed to the Government of Egypt

We will not absolutely suffer Frank ships to come to Suez, nor carry on any traffic openly or clandestinely, between this town and Judda. The sea of Suez is destined for the noble pilgrimage of Mecca. To suffer Frank ships to navigate therein, or to neglect opposing it, is betraying your Sovereign, your religion, and every Mahometan. And all those who dare transgress will find their punishment in this world, and in the world to come. It is for the most important affair of state, and of religion, that this express and irrevocable command is issued. Conform to it with zeal and with activity, for such is our royal will.

To our honoured minister and illustrious counsellor, whose prudence, sagacity, and zeal directs the affairs of the world: who is the pillar of glory and of happiness; distinguished by the protection of the most high, our Vizir Ismael Pasha. May God perpetuate your splendour!

To the most upright of judges, and the best of Mussulman commanders, source of learning and of perfection; who is an honour to the laws and to justice, adorned by the favour of the Omnipotent, our Molla of Cairo. May God increase your dignities, and your virtues!

To the powerful and honourable commanders; asylum of most illustrious suppliants: to whom is entrusted the execution of sovereign mandates, the Sheik Bellad, and other ruling Beys of Egypt. May God perpetuate your felicity!

To the most distinguished of all glorious personages, idol of the public esteem; our co-operator and commissioner, sent by our Sublime Porte, the Capigee Bachi, Mustafa Tahir Aga. May God perpetuate your glory!

To the most venerable Doctors. To the Sheriffs Vefayé, and Bekryé. To the Chiefs of the Four Sects; and to the Doctors of the Azhar. May your virtue be augmented!

To the Superiours of their Equals, the Captains, and renowned Officers of the Seven Ogiaks of Cairo. May your power be increased!

Upon the arrival of this imperial command, Know ye that Suez is the port of Mecca and of Medina, whose glory may God perpetuate unto the

end of the world! Cities illustrious for being the centre of all justice, and which give splendour to the law of the Prophet. There is no example that foreign nations, and the sons of error, have ever navigated in the Sea of Suez. It has been a constant custom, until these latter times, for the English ships, and others who trade from India, to stop at Judda; but in the time of Ali Bey, a small vessel came up to Suez, and on board was an unknown person, with presents for Ali Bey, and declaring that he only came there for freight. The English have imagined, that, authorised, by such a precedent, it was lawful for them at all times, and all seasons, to return; and we have seen, in the time of the late Mehemed Bey Aboudahab, several vessels arrive there with cargoes of muslins, and other Indian articles. A principle of avarice betrayed this Bey also into error. They represented to him an infinite accumulation of revenue to his customs, and he was debauched. Under this specious pretext the English vessels, and those of other nations established in India, continued, one instigated by the other, to frequent the port of Suez; and the English went so far as to establish magazines. So it has been reported to us.

These facts and this innovation contrary to the policy of our state, and dangerous to our religion, came to our imperial knowledge. We ordered, consequently, that the English thenceforward should return no more to Suez, nor even approach to its coasts, having enjoined expressly that they should be made to return. We notified these our orders to the English Ambassador residing at the Sublime Porte, and required him to transmit them to his court. The answers which he received, as well from his Court as the East India Company, contained severe prohibitions to any of their subjects to come to Suez after the beginning of the Greek year answering to December, 1778. This minister, in communicating these prohibitions to the Sublime Porte, did at the same time declare, by the mouth of his first interpreter, that in case of contravention, the effects of those who should contravene might be seized, their vessels confiscated, the crews of the ships and the supercargo imprisoned and condemned to perpetual slavery.

While the Sublime Porte was occupied about these matters, remonstrances relative to the same object arrived from Prince Surrou, Sheriff of Mecca. This prince deposed, that the Franks, not contented to confine their trade to Indian articles, had also embarked on board their ships coffee and other products of Yemen, which they transported to Suez, to the notable prejudice of the city of Judda. That these strangers, over-running lands and seas, take plans of every place, and preserve them until a propitious moment. Then fulfil their design of conquering the country. That this having happened in India and other places, the Sheriff was justly alarmed for his own fate, and expressed the utmost inquietude and indignation.

All this has been confirmed to us by the doctors versed in history, whom we have consulted upon the matter. They have explained to us many events which have been brought about by the insidious policy of the Franks. We learn that in the year 900, the Portuguese, and afterward the Dutch, did by long and perilous voyages arrive in India. That they there described themselves as peaceable merchants, honest and inoffensive. These people were accompanied by men of learning; curious only, they pretended, of making useful and innocent researches. The Indians, a people of contracted genius, were the dupes of this appearance. Their principal cities, such as Ahmed Abbas, Bengal, Banaras, Surat, and Madras have been the price of their credulity, and themselves are now under the dominion of these Franks.

It was by such like procedure, that in the beginning of the year 400, and the time of the Fatimites, the Franks insinuated themselves into the city of Damascus. Their first disguise was as quiet honest merchants, who punctually paid the duties of custom. A dissension took place in those days between the Fatimites and the Abissides, and the Franks, following their ordinary policy, availed of the occurrence to take possession of Damascus and Jerusalem, which they maintained for near a century.

Useff Saladin of glorious memory, appeared about the middle of the year 607, at the head of an army of Jobite Courdes and Melouk Turks, and recovered Jerusalem and Damascus after most incredible labours, and a horrible massacre of the human species. But without dwelling upon the history of ancient times, no one is ignorant of the inveterate hatred which the Christians bear to the Turks, whom they see with a jealous eye in possession of Jerusalem.

My God confound those in this world and punish them in the next with an eternal punishment, who, constructing this evil to be a good, approve the coming of the Franks to Suez! Keep before your eyes the example of India. Consider the end of things, and suffer not this intercourse. Seek out those who secretly assist them, and punish them in such a manner as has no example such as they deserve. You will not be permitted to alledge any pretence of justification. Imprison the captains of the Frank vessels, and, above all, the English, upon their coming to Suez, and seize their ships, for it is set forth in the memorial of the English Ambassador, in the answers from his Court, and in the verbal information of his first interpreter, that they are pirates and rebels to their Sovereign. They are such to my Sublime Porte, and as such they merit imprisonment, and the confiscation of their goods. You will give advice of your proceedings to the Sublime Porte, and we will decide without permitting any one to intercede for their deliverance.

You, Vizir, already mentioned; know ye, that such is the will and pleasure of the Sublime Porte. The intimate part you have had in the administration of our government sufficiently apprises you of the importance of this object. You, Molla, commanding Beys, Doctors, and Ogiacks, take proper warning. We recommend to you expressly and reiterately to watch with attention this innovation so dangerous to the state, and to religion. Conform, therefore, exactly to our command, and let our voice inspire you with a due fear - If not - by God we swear, that you will incur our indignation, and the severest punishments shall be the fruits of it. You who are enlightened by the Mussulman religion: you who are profound in history and the study of books, applaud these our orders - and if your counsel for the execution prevail not - inform the Sublime Porte of the cause and consequence.

Appendix III

Translation of a bond drawn up in Arabic by order
of the government of Egypt: 1779

Upon our arrival at Suez with our ships and merchandises, in virtue of a firman from his excellency the Basha, we landed the merchandise, part of which we conveyed to Cairo, and the remainder was plundered by the rebel Arabs of Tor, since which our effects have been sequestered in Cairo, and our persons arrested in the Grand Signor's castle, and a firman has been detached to Suez, and the ships feifed, and the people confined, and this derives from an imperial command emanated from the sublime Porte, the contents of which import. 'That our ambassador in Constantinople has seconded the Porte in authorising that all such as should come to Suez should be treated as had happened.'

We have demanded a copy of this firman, and have obtained it. After this We, the underwritten, attest and confess, that, hence forward, no English or Dane shall come to Suez, neither commit hostilities against the ships trading from Judda to Suez, and from Suez to Judda, nor against any City or Country in the Red-Sea, in any manner whatever, or under any pretext. Neither have We any pretension on account of what the Arabs have plundered, nor claim whatever against the people, nor primates, nor governors of Cairo. And we have received entirely every thing, that was sequestered, and by God's will shall depart from Suez for India, and if after our departure ships shall arrive of any nation whatever, to do hurt, is to be considered the act of the English, and we the underwritten responsible. And further, any Frank contravening, or claiming what has been plundered by the Arabs, by memorials to the Porte, and any demand made in consequence thereof, that such demands be disregarded, as we disavow the right, and the expenses incurred by the officers bearing such demands to be paid by us. In case, however, the firman arrive from the sublime Porte, permitting the ships to come to Suez, we will come with our merchandize, but without such firmans we will not come.

(Signed)

Ewen Baillie
John Hislop
Henry Sullivan
Wm. Hammond
James Grant

)
) Passengers from
) Europe to the
) East Indies

John O'Donnell
Andrew Skiddy
George Moore
Duncour Campbell
Chenaux

George Baldwin

Appendix IV

Table (made out by Baldwin) of
cloth exported from India, 1768-1782

YEAR	BALES OF INDIA GOODS EXPORTED	
1768	5	
1769	66	
1770	96 (+ cases)	
1771	71	
1772	85	
1773	222	
1774	145	} Period during which imports to Egypt were allowed
1775	229	
1776	317	
1777	264	
1778	74	} Fall due to the rupture with France
1779	4	
1780	5	} Fall due to suppression of the trade to Egypt
1781	6	
1782	5	

TOTAL: 1,593 bales (value £318,600)

Appendix V

Translation of a letter from Governor Rumbold to
Ibrahim Bey, 1782

In the name of God etc.

To Sheik Ibrahim Sheilul Beled (Ruling Bey) of Grand Cairo:

After offering such pretty words as the sheets of friendship are ornamented with, and such excellent expressions as are becoming to a person who sticks to friendship & unanimity; & after presenting such prayers as will make shine the stars with friendship & embellish the high ranks with amity & sincerity; The same prayers being designed for the person who consolidates the rules of the power of Grand Cairo, & of felicity with a just eye, and strengthens the pillars of prosperity & grandeur with his penetrating judgement, who is the raiser of the standard of security over the heads of the tribes & the possessor of the means of sway and endeavour. May not his munificence be wanting over the subjects.

It is represented to you by the Governor, Sir Thomas Rumbold, Chief of the City of Madrass, known by the title of Chief Tenent, that in conformity of your demand & desire, that we should hinder the operations of commerce of the inhabitants of India; & of their going to Cairo, we have commanded to all the merchants of the English Company, that they should refrain from passing at Cairo by way of trade, and we do not doubt but that this will please you. Now it being evident that your satisfaction proceeds by our sincere friendship that subsisted between us and our superiors: As we send every year by way of Cairo to England dispatches and persons belonging to the Company, we do now dispatch from hence towards Cairo Mr. Wooley, His Britannick Majesty's Officer, with a chest of writings with him, & we beg from your perfect amity, that you should pay due regard to the benevolence and sincerity of your predecessors, relative to the dispatches & to the persons that belong to the English Company that carry the dispatches, with your most careful & kind assistance. After this, it is notified to you that the two ships that are gone from hence, one from the part of the King of England, and the other from the Company's, are bound for the City of Suez, & that the above mentioned Mr. Wooley on his passage to Alexandria must stop in said city of Suez, till the news of the said two ships arrival comes to you, & then he'll depart from thence. Last year you had stop'd some goods belonging to the Franks. It is

perfectly known for certain that you had delivered them to their owners after having been persuaded of the justice, and before this came to your hands. It is hoped that you'll continue in that friendship, that has been bonded between our common predecessors. It has been wrote the 28th of the Hagira.

Translated by Peter Crutta¹

¹British Embassy official in Constantinople.

Appendix VITranslation of the agreement between
Truguet and Shaykh Nâsir Shadîd

Le seize de la lune de rebiul ewel l'an de l'egere 1199
le 27 janvier 1785 en presence des temoins signés dessous, et
du très distingué Moualllem Joseph Cassab directeur général
des douanes de l'Egypte. Il a été convenu entre le très honoré.
El Hadgi Naser Chedid bedouin Cheikh arabe de la dependance du
Caire, et le S. le Truguet officier français envoye en Egypte
par le roi de France.

Que lorsqu'il arriveroit des batimens francais à Suez Naser Chedid enverra ses gens armés au port de Sure avec tous les chameaux qui feront necessaires pour transporter et escorter les marchandises de ces batimens du port de Suez au Caire. Le gafar ou peage que les marchandises payent aux arabes sur cette route sera a la charge du dit Cheikh Naser, ainsi que le salaire des gens chargés de les conduire et de les escorter sans qu'il puisse jamais s'elever sur cet objet aucune discussion ou difficulté. Le dit Cheikh Naser Chedid est convenu solennellement qu'il previendra et repondra personnellement de tous les evenements facheux qui pourroient arriver à ces dites marchandises moyennent qu'on lui payera cinq pataques pour chaque charge de chameau. Des qu'il arrivera quelque batiment à Suez le dit Naser Chedid fera dresser une piece juridique pas devant le cadî pour constater qu'il se charge et repond des marchandises dans leurs transport. Arrêté et conclu entre le Hadji Naser Chedid et le S. de Truguet qui ont signé le present écrit.

Il a été depuis ajouté a ces presentes conventiones que si tout autre que le cheikh Naser Chedid etait chargé du transport de ces marchandises, le cheikh Naser déclare qu'il ne repond plus des evenements que dès lors ne peuvent être à sa charge.

Signé (Naser Chedid
(Ismael (temoin)
(Mustafa Ahmad (temoin)
(Hassan (temoin)
(Truguet

Appendix VIIBritish Ships in Egypt: 1788-1794

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Port</u>	<u>Date</u>
1.	"Britannia"		Alexandria	June 1788
* 2.	"New Euphrates"	loaded senna, myrrh	Alexandria	June 1788
* 3.	"Pollard"	loaded natron, myrrh coffee, gum	Alexandria	April 1789
4.	Baldwin's commission from Isma'il. "Watkins"	See Chapter IV, p.21	Alexandria	July 1789
L* 5.	"Ceres"	loaded natron	Alexandria	Sept. 1790
6.	Baldwin mentions arrival p.27. Name unknown	dispatches	Suez	Nov. 1790
* 7.	"Betsey"	loaded natron, flax, coffee	Alexandria	Dec. 1790
* 8.	"Betsey"	loaded natron	Alexandria	Dec. 1791
L* 9.	"Levant"	loaded 80 tons, natron	Alexandria	Jan. 1792
L* 10.	"Delta"	loaded 146 tons, natron	Alexandria	May 1792
L* 11.	"Jackall"	loaded 44 tons natron; cotton, opium, pistachios	Alexandria	May 1792
* 12.	"Frederick"	loaded natron, 165 tons; cotton, ostrich feather, wool	Alexandria	May 1792

L Indicates consignments to Rich. & W. Lee, Baldwin's agents in London.

* It must be noted that the dates given are not the ones when the vessels landed in Alexandria, since they were dated later in the Impositions Book, The Levant Company. SP 105/171.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Port</u>	<u>Date</u>
L* 13. "Levant"	loaded natron, 183 tons	Alexandria	Oct. 1792
L* 14. "Frederick"	loaded natron, 172 tons	Alexandria	Nov. 1792
L* 15. "Ceres"	loaded natron, 368 tons; cotton, 100 bales	Alexandria	Dec. 1792
* 16. "Mohawk"	loaded natron, 150 tons; cotton-wool	Alexandria	Dec. 1792
* 17. "William and Robert"	loaded natron, 440 tons	Alexandria	Dec. 1792
L* 18. "Pollard"	loaded natron, 90 tons; india bales	Alexandria	Nov. 1792
L* 19. "Minerva"	loaded natron, 226 tons; asphaltum, coffee, gum	Alexandria	Dec. 1792
L* 20. "Mercury"	loaded natron, 133 tons	Alexandria	March 1793
L* 21. "Allison"	loaded natron, 84 tons; gum, cotton, myrrh	Alexandria	June 26, 1793
* 22. "Acorn"	loaded natron, 344 tons	Alexandria	June 1793
* 23. "Drake" (Sloop)	brought dispatches	Suez	April 1793
* 24. "William"	loaded natron, 119 tons	Alexandria	Sept. 1794
* 25. "Rossetti"	loaded natron, 252 tons	Alexandria	Sept. 1794

Appendix VIII

Translation of the agreement between Baldwin, and Ibrāhīm
and Murād, February 1794

In the name of God! Amen!

It being well known that the subjects of the King of Great Britain, are authorised by sacred Capitulations, from the Sublime Porte, to navigate their ships to all- and any of the ports in the Grand Signior's Dominions and for the purposes of traffic to settle in all, or any of the cities, or places of the Turkish Empire, as a reference being had to the 1st. 2nd. 14th. and 41st. articles of the said Capitulations more particularly set forth. And it being the desire of the English merchants, to return to Suez with their ships and to carry on trade, as in the other parts of the Grand Signor's dominions, provided the same security and protection can be given to their persons and effects: and the said George Baldwin, settled in Egypt as Consul General for the King of Great Britain, having manifested this desire, to the Beys in power; They, whom God glorify, faithful viceregents at Suez, which is an Ottoman port, and subjected to the power of the Court of Constantinople, considering the interest of the two nations, to require a good understanding in this respect that the ancient intercourse should be reestablished and the said Consul General, giving assurance, from its conformity with the spirit and express tenour of the sacred Capitulations, granted to the English nation, by the Sublime Porte, that the same will be confirmed by a firman from the Sublime Porte /which God preserve from all dangers/ His Lordship Ibrahim Bey Shieck il Bellad in Caireo, whom God preserve, and his Lordship Murad Bey, formerly Emir Hadje (whom the Almighty prosper) on the one part and the most distinguished among his Com peers, George Baldwin, Consul general for the King of Great Britain, on the other part, have voluntarily agreed:

- (1) That the subjects of the King of Great Britain shall in all cases whatsoever, be treated on a footing with the most favoured nation.
- (2) All ships belonging to English merchants, have leave to enter into any port, within the government of Egypt. A duty of one hundred crowns or real about taka, shall be paid for anchorage and every other fee whatsoever - by every merchant ship that shall arrive at Suez, small or great, excepting Kings ships and no more. And this shall be paid by the Consul in Cairo to the Commandant of Suez, or to his vekil, that nothing more be demanded of the captain, his people or his passengers at

Suez who are not to be stopped or molested on any pretence whatsoever, and the governor at Suez, appointed by the government of Egypt, is to assist them with everything, they shall have occasion for, at a just price.

- (3) If any English ships should be wrecked in any port, or on any coast within the government of Cairo, the Governor shall be obliged to assist them with all speed and protect them in the recovery of their ships and their effects and the English merchants owners of such ships and goods, shall pay the people employed in such recovery and they are to receive the whole property recovered and pay the customs of the goods when sold as hereafter mentioned.
- (4) English ships of war, employed by their sovereign, to convoy and protect the merchant ships, or on any other service are not to pay, either anchorage or any other duty and if the captains or any other, belonging to such ships, should go on shore, no one is to obstruct them or make any demand to avoid harm; but if it should so happen that anybody were to molest them, or do them injury, the governor of Cairo shall punish the offender, and such honours shall be paid to the captains of British ships of war, as their high station demands and they are entitled to pretend.
- (5) Should it happen that the ships of the English merchants, should be unable to reach Suez, but obliged to anchor in the port of Tor or any other, subject to the government, of Egypt: The Governors of Cairo shall send people to defend their property and convoy it safe to Cairo.
- (6) And as it often happens, that ships cannot on account of contrary winds, proceed further on their voyage than Cosir, the Government of Egypt, shall take the same measure with regard to these as with regard to those in the port of Tor.
- (7) Should it happen that any Musulman or any subject of the Caireen government have any dispute with an Englishman and any injury ensue whether by words or blows, justice shall be done and if the Egyptian be in the wrong, the delinquent shall be traduced to Cairo and undergo the punishment, he may deserve, and if it appears that the Englishman is the aggressor, he shall be sent on shipboard to the Captain who shall punish him, or to his consul, who will do justice, as the case may require such being particularly consented by in the Capitulations from the Sublime Porte.
- (8) All English merchants as well those coming from England on their way to India or those coming from India on their way to England, shall be assisted with all kindness, no one shall stop or inspect their equipage or baggage, nor their letters but they are to receive all respect, be accommodated protected and supplied at a reasonable rate, with provisions and water from any place they please and as much as they please, without hindrance or restraint.

- (9) At all times when ships arrive at Suez, the agents appointed by the Consul General for that purpose shall go on board and take an account of the cargoes and receive the letters and the Governor of Suez shall be instructed to provide messengers to bring the same without delay to the Consul General at Cairo who will immediately give notice of the business of the ship to the government of Cairo. And the ships shall anchor, wherever they please and no body is to interfere with their advice or give the least impediment or go on board of any of the English ships, without the captains leave, and they shall load and unload, their ships, with their own people without the assistance of the natives of Egypt, unless they should be called for and shall appoint their own pilots and the ships boats loaded or unloaded, shall not be examined by anyone.
- (10) No persons on the part of the Governor of Suez, nor any one else, can examine the merchandise but only the officers appointed by His Excellency the Pasha of Cairo, and the highly honoured Beys, can take note of the bales and parcels, attended by the Consul's agent.
- (11) A faithful account of the contents of each package, shall be delivered by the Consul, to the said officers appointed as before and if any doubt should arise, as to the fidelity of the same, many of the packages, such as the said officers may fix upon, may be opened and compared and if found to correspond, the rest may be received upon faith of the note and the custom settles thereon, that is to say, the linnens and druggs and every other article, the produce of India, shall be fairly estimated, according to their value and the amount calculated and agreed upon, three per cent of the said amount, shall be paid in money to the officer of the Pasha, so much and no more being authorized and allowed by the sacred Capitulations, granted to the English nation, by the Sublime Porte, which God preserve from evil! And in consideration of the protection to be granted by the princes, governors of Egypt, to the objects of this treaty and of their engaging for the security of the persons and effects, once entered into their country and of their promise of recovering or indemnifying the English consul, for what may be plundered or lost, it is agreed that 6 percent more, shall be paid to the said governors of Egypt; that is to say, 30/o at the charge of the English merchants, importers of the goods and the other 30/o at the charge of the purchasers, the said princes, renouncing any further pretention whatsoever on said purchasers; this imposition paid formerly having proved detrimental to the English trade, But if there should arise any disagreement about the equitable estimation of the goods, then the English merchants may be permitted, to send back what they may deem

overrated, to India, without paying any duty, at all. And if the English ships, should bring to Suez any merchandise not the production of India, such as cloth, tin, and iron or other articles, the produce of Great Britain, on them only 3 per cent shall be paid for custom, as is established by the royal Capitulation, without any further imposition whatsoever.

- (12) Should the English merchants not be satisfied with the prices offered for their merchandize at Cairo, they are permitted to export them to any other country, without being subject to any further duty whatsoever and nobody shall exact it and no body prevent the exportation of the same freely and without question.
- (13) It being necessary for the English merchants, to have their property well housed and in safe keeping and the English merchants themselves, being desirous of living separately and conveniently. The princes governors of Cairo, do promise, that a proper building shall be assigned to them for that purpose at Suez. And if not satisfied therewith, they may be allowed to build such conveniencies at their own expence: a second shall be erected for them at Bulacco, or other pleasant situation near Cairo for the residence of the consul and factory and another at Alexandria, the consul and the factory undertaking to pay rent for the same at a reasonable rate.
- (14) And to prevent all illicit and irregular practices and for the maintenance of good order, it is stipulated that no person or persons, shall be allowed to participate of the benefit of this treaty, but such as His Majesty's consul general may pronounce to be well qualified in conformity with the instructions he may receive from the Kings ministers in England. And for the same reason no goods shall be embarked on the English ships for India, but such as are manifested to the Consul and are confronted by the agent at Suez.
- (15) As soon as the merchant ships arrive at Suez the governor shall send people to convoy the cargoes to Cairo and shall take charge of them and shall secure them from the depravations of the Arabs and they shall be carried with all safety and free from all danger. For the princes governors of Egypt are answerable for their safety and engage to ensure them against loss. The goods shall be brought and housed in the English okel and no where else.
- (16) In case it might happen, that the trade should be suppressed and this treaty cease to operate, from whatsoever cause it might proceed; time shall be given to the merchants, to settle their affairs and to withdraw their persons and effects, at least twelvemonths and the princes governors of Egypt, shall aid them with their power to recover monies due to illegible merchants and obtain full justice in their demands.
- (17) Neither merchants nor captains of the ships, shall be obliged to make presents to the governor of Suez, to the officers of the Beys, who may accompany the caravan, or any other persons whatsoever, the duties agreed to be paid on the merchandises, being all that can be demanded.

- (18) With regard to coffee, if it should happen, that there should be any on board for private use, or for presents, the customary duties should be paid.

These articles being established with the mutual consent of the princes governors of Egypt / whom God preserve / and the British consul general aforesaid; They have hereunto affixed their names, high in honour and seals, as pledges of their serious intention to maintain the conditions with truth and fidelity, although the observance, be not to commence untill the arrival of orders from the Sublime Porte of Constantinople, which God preserve! Cairo the twenty seventh day of Rejab in the year of the Hegira one thousand two hundred and eight.

Signed.

----- Ibrahim Bey, Emir il Liwah, Caimacan Mesr Saabeck
----- Murad Bey Emir il Liwah, Emir Hadje Saabeck.

Appendix IX

The minutes of the meeting between Major MacDonald
and Ibrahim Bey, recorded by Rosetti

In consequence of the ideas communicated to me by Major MacDonald I have proposed to his Highness Ibrahim Bey, and Murad Bey, the ruling chiefs of Egypt, the establishment of an English factory at Kenni and Cosseir for the purposes of receiving and forwarding dispatches from India and at the same time to carry on a direct commerce.

The said Beys in the presence of the said Major, have authorized me to assure the Government of Great Britain in their name that they shall be well pleased with such an establishment, and that they will grant them all the privileges that the resident enjoys at Bussorah - viz Immunity, the power of hoisting the flag and the right of judging, not only the native English, but all those who shall be in their service, the rights of navigating upon the Nile, small boats under English colours, without being subject to be visited except by consent of the residents or agents to whom those barks may be consigned provided they be answerable to the customs house.

At Cosseir and Kenni everything shall be exempted from duties. It is understood that the said establishment shall be composed of mild and respectable persons, known to me, and for whom I shall be answerable, care to be taken not to give offence to the Porte.

It being necessary to remove the scruples of the Beys, I assured them that England would at all times be their friend, and in no instance would undertake any measure, but what should be to their advantage. Upon this promise, the Beys have agreed that the residents and agents may have from 50 to 100 soldiers for their further security. But they must acknowledge the Beys, the governor appointed by them, who resides always at Kenni on which the port of Cosseir is dependent.

This is the true and concise statement of the conversation I had with the Beys. The knowledge and penetration of the English make it necessary for me to point out the advantages they may derive from such an establishment, as well with regard to commerce as in a political point of view, provided they employ prudent and capable persons, to cultivate a good understanding with those whom they will have to treat with. For the political department it will be necessary they should be furnished with instructions to act on the moment, and as circumstances might require. And it is necessary

that the government of India should be directed to second and support the agents here as they will have to do with a government not to accustomed to act with much presight.

The agents should have the means of supporting their station with dignity, and on particular occasions to act with a degree of splendour.

Even the grandees of the country are under the necessity to live in a liberal and generous manner to assure to them that marked superiority to which all of them ambitiously aspire.

Appendix X

The writings of Baldwin

1. On Magnetic Sleep:

Apart from his political life, the next great preoccupation of Baldwin was a concern into the matter of magnetic sleep. Around 1778, the teachings of Mesmer had become very fashionable in Paris. Hypnosis, or artificial sleep, was based on the theory that a magnetic fluid, stored up in the body, could be used by one person reacting on another; this was used as a cure for diseases. Baldwin became very much involved with experiments of this kind when he lived in Alexandria as British consul-general. He was aided in his efforts by an Italian, Cesare Avena di Valdiere, who stayed with Baldwin in Alexandria in 1795. Three works were the results of this friendship and collaboration:

- A. La Prima Musa Clio¹ which was a translation by Baldwin of Valdiere's original in the Italian. The title page gives an indication of the content: "The Divine Traveller, exhibiting a series of writings obtained in the extasy of magnetic sleep. Most important to the integrity of the fact, Most interesting to the curious, Most consoling to the afflicted and Most edifying to the dubious among mankind". In 1802, Baldwin had presented the British Museum with a copy of the original work in Italian, but apparently the interest of the public was so great, that he was called upon to translate it.
- B. Tre Opere Drammatiche², or Three Dramatic Works. The names of the works are "Il Trionfo di Melibee"; "La Cipria Silene"; and "La Coronazione di Silene". These were written during the extasy of magnetic sleep; Valdiere was in a trance, and Baldwin wrote the effects.
- C. Book of Dreams³ is the story of a series of dreams of a sick orphan who was under magnetic treatment. Baldwin edited the work, and added interpretations; he then sold it and gave the proceeds to the orphan. The experiments were undertaken in August 1811, by Valdiere, of whom Baldwin was said

¹London, 1810.

²London, 1811.

³London, 1815.

to be "... an easy dupe... who contrived to turn the Consul's weakness in this particular to good account".¹

2. Antiquity:

Although Baldwin, during his stay in Egypt, made no mention of it, he collected antiques. Ainslie seemed to be far more interested in Ancient Egyptian art, for he occasionally asked Baldwin to send him anything he could find that would enrich his personal collection. However, the catalogue of the British Museum ascribes to George Baldwin a series of sixty lithographs of ancient art, enclosed in a bound volume entitled Baldwin's Museum. Sometime after his return to England in 1802, Baldwin did sell his personal collection of art at Christie's in London, so it is not unlikely that the volume is correctly attributed to him, although there is no indication as to who the Baldwin of the title may be.

5. The Plague:

When Baldwin was confined to quarantine during the plague of 1791, he busied himself with finding a cure for the disease. When he had sufficient evidence to validate his theory, he sent it to London.² But he did not stop at that; he incorporated it into his collection of essays Political Recollections Relative to Egypt. In this, it appears as "Essay on the Plague, supported by a variety of evidence in support of the efficacy of oil". The method of rubbing olive oil on the sores, apparently advocated by Baldwin, was given to the Rev. Lewis de Pavia, chaplain and agent of St. Anthony's Hospital in Smyrna. Pavia passed on the information to the Count Berchtold of Vienna in 1797. Berchtold published it, and a copy was sent to the Royal Academy of Sciences in Lisbon, who in turn ordered it to be translated into Arabic, French, and Portuguese.³ The method was recommended to Citizen Desgenettes, Chief Physician of the French army in Egypt, and whose "Remarks on the use of oil in the plague" Baldwin included in Political Recollections.

4. The Slave Trade:

In 1789, Carmarthen asked Baldwin to prepare a treatise on the slave trade in Egypt. This resulted in Memorial Relative to the Trade in Slaves carried on in Alexandria, which was published separately,⁴

¹See Jane Baldwin's Obituary, Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 12, London, 1839, p. 657.

²FO 24/1, Baldwin to Grenville, Sept. 17, 1791.

³"Directions for the Cure of the Plague", Annual Register, London, 1798.

⁴As Memorial relating to the slave trade in Egypt.

and also incorporated into Political Recollections. Baldwin gave an account of the number of slaves brought into Egypt annually from Asia and Africa, and he also included information about the caravans sent from Egypt to Africa, what they carried, what kind of commerce they did; he ended it with a crude outline of the government of these countries. of Africa.

5. Other Works:

- A. Philosophical Essays, dedicated to Governor Johnstone, one of Baldwin's main supporters in his political efforts in Egypt. This was written when Baldwin was in England following the 1779 caravan disaster and before he received the appointment of consul-general in Egypt. The title page explains the reason for its composition: "It is the production of my hours of expectation: the amusements of those moments of resignation to an obstinate fate - which your labours - which your protection have enabled me to overcome - ". It is made up of fourteen essays that deal with such varied topics as "On Time", "On water as an element", "On electricity", "On attraction" etc.
- B. Mr. Baldwin's Legacy to His Daughter. The title continues, Or the Divinity of Truth, and includes "a series of writings obtained from the hand of C. Avena de Valdiero, in the magnetic sleep".

6. Political Works:

- A. Narrative of Facts Relating to the Plunder of the English Merchants by the Arabs and other subsequent Outrages of the Government of Cairo in the Course of the Year 1779 is a short description of the events of the caravan disaster. The title page describes more of the contents: "Premised by some references to the conduct of Carlo Rosetti which have been made necessary by his being discovered to be a principal in advising and effecting the operation from the beginning to the end." The Narrative is followed by a long list of copies of the letters exchanged between Ainslie and Baldwin during and after the crisis.
- B. Political Recollections Relative to Egypt.¹ This is made up of a number of sections:
 - a. Preface: This is based on a brief account of Baldwin's early reasons to settle in Egypt, and an outline of the

¹There are two editions of this: the first, published in 1801, and the second, in 1802. The latter is the one used in this study since it has additions concerning the British expedition to Egypt.

major episodes of his residence there.

- b. Letter to Dundas, (from Baldwin) that was started on 9 December 1800. In it, he suggested that the British
- f. forces land at Acre, and march along the coast to Egypt. The reasons for this were: first, it would be a good preparation for the troops to the climate of the country; and second, it would bring the British army into cooperation with the Ottoman forces, thus forcing the French to extend their line of defence. The first part of the letter was not finally sent to Dundas, since Baldwin was in a hurry to join Abercromby and Keith. It was completed on 27 August 1801.
- c. Considerations for the Army on an Expedition to Egypt. This was written when Baldwin was on his way to Malta from Memrice in December 1800, and intended for Abercromby. The two sections are: "As to the Climate"; and, "As to the Disembarkation of the Army", in which he pointed out the disadvantages of Alexandria, Abū Qīr and Rosetta as landing places, and showed the qualities of the bay of Acre.
- d. Letter to Abercromby, (from Baldwin) dated 1 February 1801, and written on board H.M.S. "Foudroyant" at Memrice. In this Baldwin warned of the possibility of the army becoming infected with the plague, and enclosed his own work on the disease, and how it could be cured.
- e. A Narrative of the British Campaign in Egypt in the Spring of 1801 in a letter to John Baldwin, Esq., Baldwin's cousin. This was written on 19 May 1801, and a supplement continued the narrative on 27 April 1802.¹
- f. Letter to Dundas (from Baldwin) written on 27 September 1801 advocates the "expediency of retaining Egypt under the controul of Great Britain".² Baldwin was concerned with the aftermath of the victory at Acre; he foresaw more trouble ahead. "... the political cauldron is com-

¹See Chapter V, pp.

²Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.159.

pounding of greater events. More is foreboding: more 'hubble bubble'; more 'toil and trouble'.¹ He was convinced that France would never lose her desire to be the "arbiter of Turkey".² Bonaparte, according to Baldwin, "... did not turn from his design. He carried it boiling in his stomach to France."³ It was up to Britain now to keep Egypt under its aegis, and derive from it all the commercial benefits it could bring. "If it can be held to England, she may talk of jewels in her crown, but a brighter than this she will not possess."⁴

- g. Speculations on the Situation and Resources of Egypt:
From observations began in 1773, and continued, as opportunities favoured until the year 1781. These reflections thrown together in the year 1785. The tract is a detailed, if somewhat short, outline of the position, trade, resources, and government of Egypt. Written at the request of the India Board in 1785, it contains a prophetic analysis of the importance of the country to England and to France, and how the latter could easily conquer it. There are nine chapters:

Chapter 1. "As to its situation relative to other parts of the globe."

The unique geographical position of the country is the subject of this chapter. Its central location gave it quick and easy connection with Africa, India, Europe, and even some parts of North and South America. Baldwin pointed out that it could be reached from Asia, Africa and Europe within ninety days; it could serve as a link between England and its possessions in India in sixty days, "... and in one hundred days may send her tidings to the farthest corners of the earth."⁵

¹Ibid., p.162.

²Ibid., p.168.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p.176.

⁵Baldwin, Pol. Rec., p.182.

Chapter 2. "As to its commerce".

The commerce of Egypt was in an advantageous position because of the very communication mentioned above. Internally, the Nile provided the same facility for mobility.

Chapter 3. "As to its productions and commercial resources".

Baldwin calculated that the resources of the country could supply one thousand ships a year, "... with her superfluous productions".¹ He went on to say: "She is the magazine of all the trade of Yemen; the mart for all the coffee and rich gums of that proud territory: she is the magazine to all the interior parts of Africa, producing gold dust, ivory, senna, drugs; she is the resort of all the traders of the world: it seems a common centre of universal commerce: the coin of all the world is current here."²

Chapter 4. "As to its government".

Baldwin was highly aware of the state of the Egyptian government, and said of the country "It is neither a dependent or independent state..."³ He attributed the decline in power of the Pasha and the evident importance of the mamlûks to a simple historical fact: When Sultan Selim, the conqueror of Egypt in the early sixteenth century, set up the government of Egypt, he was afraid that if he gave too much power to the Pasha, the wealth of the country and its distance from Constantinople would be lost to the Porte by the rapacity of one governor; he therefore divided the power of the rulers. Baldwin did not see this as a wise move, for the "restive spirit" of the mamlûks seized the situation to further aggravate the political status of the country.

Baldwin's opinion of the mamlûks was not a particularly flattering one. Apostacy he claimed

¹Ibid., p.184.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p.185.

to be "their road to honour", and assassination "their title to power".¹ They were anarchic as a body, and had few principles or any kind of moral code to guide their actions. He did not put it beyond the Pasha to divide and rule his motley crew of beys. The best example he gave was of the revolt of 'Alī Bey al-Kabīr. Although the Porte used no pressure to suppress him, he did manage to be extinguished in a short while. The very same power that brought on his rise to power also issued his downfall; it was his own mamluk, Muḥammad Bey Abu'l Dhahab who seized his position.

Chapter 5. "As to its means of conquest".

Baldwin regarded Egypt as an invincible power in comparison to its neighbours. Once again, he used the example of 'Alī Bey to illustrate his thesis, comparing him with any great warrior. "When Ali Bey threw off the yoke, he marched to Mecca, and subdued it. He marched to Palestine, and subdued it. He marched to Syria, and subdued Damascus, Sydon, and Tripoly. He could say, with Caesar, 'veni, vidi, vici'.² Although 'Alī's conquests were short-lived, Baldwin did not consider it unlikely that Egypt would be able to raise another conqueror similar in ability to him. Baldwin carefully noted, however, that the country would never need to go to war in order to conquer for its own needs; it would only do so for the sake of empire. "Their conquests should argue for the martial spirit of the people, as the supplies do for the resources of the country: no such thing! Ali Bey had made himself terrible by his severity at home; and as he marched out, nobody was prepared to encounter him. He owed his conquests to the exhausted state of the countries he assailed; for victories he gained none! How could he? he was not opposed."³

¹ Ibid., p.188.

² Ibid., p.192.

³ Ibid., pp. 193-4.

Chapter 6. "As to its present state, and aptibility to defence". Because of the political instability of the country, it was completely defenceless to invasion. "Egypt is accessible on all sides, because of the ignorance and want of discipline in its present possessors. All the avenues to it are open and unguarded."¹ Baldwin then proceeded to describe the different ports of the country and which ones are liable to conquest by a fleet. The old port of Alexandria he saw as particularly good to land a foreign fleet. Finally, he voiced his opinion as to what an occupying army would be faced with from the Egyptians. "The actual inhabitants would form to discipline, as the Indians, and be in a condition to contribute to its defence. They are robust and pliant, inured to fatigue, and very indifferent as to their condition in life."²

Chapter 7. "As to the importance of this situation to England, simply in subservience to her political and commercial correspondence with India." The importance of Egypt to England was a constantly re-iterated theme in most of Baldwin's dispatches to London, as well as having a separate heading in this treatise on Egypt. The communication with India was, of course, the first point that he made. It would be a great asset to the merchants of Bengal who would have a new and considerable market in Suez for their products. It would also lessen the trade of the French, "... by taking away the foundation of their trade."³ Most important of all, it would provide a speedy passage to British possessions in India; "... and in the event of a sudden war, may enable us to conquer our rivals, and add their possessions to our own." But a much more pertinent argument was one that he put forth in the next chapter.

¹Ibid., pp. 198-9.

²Ibid., p.202.

³Ibid., p.203.

Chapter 8. "As to the importance of Egypt to France". Baldwin's views here were in regard to the vital interest France would have in conquering Egypt. He saw this as the greatest threat to Britain. After the independence of the American colonies, it seemed clear to Baldwin that France would turn to Egypt to further her dominions. The innumerable advantages of Egypt to France were set down by Baldwin: it was close enough to France to make it worthwhile as an added dominion; its resources and wealth would sizeably add to those of France; it was not subject to great physical upheavals such as earthquakes and hurricanes; it would be self-supporting to the French troops stationed there. He concluded thus: "England must now look with a jealous eye to the machinations of France."¹

Chapter 9. "As to the conquest of Egypt by France". This was a threat that Baldwin was ever-mindful of. It would be based on the collapsing state of the Ottoman Empire, and on the weakness of the Egyptian government. "France, in possession of Egypt, would possess the master-key to all the trading nations of the earth. Enlightened, as the times are, in the general arts of navigation and commerce, she might make it the emporium of the world: she might make it the awe of the Eastern world, by the facility she would command of transporting her forces thither, by surprise, in any number, and at any time; and England would hold her possessions in India at the mercy of France."²

- h. Memorial Relating to the Trade in Slaves Carried on in Egypt.
- i. Remarks on the Use of Oil in the Plague. By Citizen Desgenettes, Chief Physician to the Army of the East.
- j. Essay on the Plague, supported by a variety of evidence in support of the efficacy of oil.

¹Ibid., p.210.

²Ibid., p.217.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Add. Mss.	Additional Manuscripts
AE	Affaires Etrangères
BT	Board of Trade
CO	Colonial Office
Corr. Cons.	Correspondance Consulaire et Commerciale
Corr. Pol.	Correspondence Politique
Egypt 5	Factory Records, Egypt and the Red Sea, volume 5.
FO	Foreign Office
Home Misc.	Home Miscellaneous
SP	State Papers
WO	War Office
T	Treasury

UNPUBLISHED PRIMARY SOURCESE N G L I S HPUBLIC RECORD OFFICE1. State Papers

a) SP 105 : Levant Company

- i) vols. 119-222, copies of outgoing letters, 1758-1805
- ii) vols. 126-128, letters received, 1797-1802
- iii) vol. 104, Murray to Ottoman Government, 1768-1775
- iv) vol. 146, Register Book, 1775-1778
- v) vol. 165, Ledger Book, 1772-1803
- vi) vols. 170-171, Impositions Book, 1762-1797
- vii) vols. 185-190, Chancery Register, 1772-1801
- viii) vol. 204, Account Book, 1779
- ix) vol. 211, Order Book, 1734-1818
- x) vol. 337, Register of assemblies (Smyrna), 1757-1804
- xi) vol. 342, Cairo: chancery of consulate, 1708-9, 1742
- xii) vol. 213, Journal, 1787-1799

b) SP 97: Turkey

- i) vols. 43-50, Murray, 1766-1774
- ii) vol. 51, Murray and Hayes, 1775
- iii) vols. 52-55, Ainslie and Hayes, 1776-1779
- iv) vols. 56-58, Miscellaneous papers, 1706-1779

- c) SP 102: Royal Letters
 - i) vol. 62, Turkey, 1689-1774

2. Foreign Office

- a) FO 24: Egypt
 - i) vol. 1, 1785-1796
 - ii) vol. 2, 1803-1806
 - iii) vol. 3, 1807-1810

- b) FO 78: Turkey
 - i) vols. 1-14, Ainslie, 1780-1793
 - ii) vol. 15, Ainslie and Liston, 1794
 - iii) vol. 16, Liston and J. Spencer Smith, 1795
 - iv) vols. 17-20, Smith, 1796-1798
 - v) vol. 21, Sydney and J. Spencer Smith, January to March, 1799
 - vi) vol. 22, Sydney Smith, April to October, 1799
 - vii) vol. 23, Sydney Smith, November and December, 1799
 - viii) vol. 24, Earl of Elgin, August to December, 1799

- c) FO 95: Miscellanea
 - i) vol. 8, Treaty Papers, including Turkey, 1781-1838
 - ii) vol. 23, Letters and Papers, Turkey, 1814-1815
 - iii) vol. 496, Royal Letters, Persia and Turkey, 1789-1837

- d) FO 261: Turkey, additional
 - i) vols. 1-7, Ainslie to Secretary of State and Levant Company, 1783-1794

3. War Office

- a) WO 1
 - i) vol.344, Egypt, 1795-1800
 - ii) vol.345, Egypt, 1801
 - iii) vol.361, Ceylon, 1795-1797
 - iv) vol.769, Foreign Office, 1797-1798

4. Board of Trade

- a) BT 6: Miscellaneous
 - i) vol. 73, Turkey trade, 1784-1790

5. Colonial Office

- a) CO 391: Minutes of the Board of Trade
 - i) vol. 84

6. Treasury

- a) T 1: Board Papers
 - i) vols.759-760, 1796.

INDIA OFFICE LIBRARY1. Factory Records

- i) Egypt and the Red Sea, vol. 5 (1773-1785)
- ii) Egypt and the Red Sea, vol. 5a (1786-1799)
- iii) Egypt and the Red Sea, vol. 6 (1799-1807)

2. Home Miscellaneous Series

- i) vol. 123, 1776 French attempts to trade at Suez, p.419
- ii) vol. 133, Court of Directors, prohibition of Suez
trade, pp. 209-27
- iii) vol. 140, On English trade at Suez, pp. 323-4
- iv) vol. 142, Stanier Porten on 1779 Turkish promise, pp. 39-41
- v) vol. 143, On English trade at Suez (1779), pp. 171-4
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- vii) vol. 161, Ainslie to Latouche, 1782, pp. 179-82
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- viii) Add.Mss. 29234 f.32: Hastings to George III
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- x) Add.Mss. 35511-35544 }
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- xi) Add.Mss. 19290: Voyage from Suez to Bombay, "Panther", 1794
- xii) Add.Mss. 19289: Voyage to the Red Sea (Major MacDonald)
- xiii) Add.Mss. 35118: Correspondence of R. B. Sheridan, 1770-1827

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i) AD, XV, 54

2. Affaires Etrangèresi) AE, B_I, 22-38: ordres et dépêches, Levant et Barbarie,
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ii) Le Caire, Tome 25: 1786-1796

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